

## **Search for Common Ground**

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### **EVALUATION OF**

### **“SUPPORT TO LOCAL INITIATIVES FOR NON- VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION”**

**DECEMBER 2005**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Academy of Educational Development
AMP	Approach and Methodological Paper
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ICPRI	Israeli-Palestinian Center for Research and Information
Maan	Maan network
MEND	Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy
MP	Member of Palestinian Legislative Council
MoE	Palestinian Ministry of Education
NCG	Nordic Consulting Group
NVCR	Support for Local Initiatives for Non-Violent Conflict Resolution Program
PA	Palestinian Authority (PNA)
PCDCR	Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PICCR	Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights
PBC/PSC	Palestine Broadcasting Channel/Satellite Channel
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SFCGJ	Search for Common Ground Jerusalem Office
SG	Student Government
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNRWA	United Nations Relief Work Agency
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## FOREWORD

The appraisal team would like to express its sincere thanks and appreciation to Search for Common Ground for trusting us with the task of evaluating two of its projects in the Palestinian areas, especially all the staff in the Jerusalem Office, director John Bell, program coordinator Ms Mona Duzdar, director of regional security projects Ms Gayle Meyers and Ms Alice Rowley for following up with us from SFCG's offices in Washington DC.

We would also like to thank the Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Gaza and Nablus for receiving us so well during our mission, in particular the director Said Muqadameh, project director Eyad Abu Hajjar, Samira Abu Aish, Rania and Samer Jibril, project coordinator in Nablus for facilitating all meetings and visits to the schools and student governments.

Thanks also to the wonderful crew and team in Bethlehem working with the drama series "Seriously Joking" at the Maan network of TV stations, especially program coordinator and journalist Linda Banoura, director Raeda Ghazaleh, assistant producer Rifaat Adi and the actors and technical staff – and of course Maan's director, Raed Othman, for his hospitality and cooperation.

Finally, thanks to Jens Claussen from Nordic Consulting Group for quality-assurance.

It is our hope that this report can assist in further developing and enhancing the relationship between SFCG and Palestinian cooperating organizations.

Any errors and mistakes in this report are our sole responsibility.

Oslo/Ramallah 9<sup>th</sup> December 2005

Nora Ingdal

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY WITH CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents the outcome of an evaluation by Nordic Consulting Group, Norway, of two projects supported by the Search for Common Ground (SFCG) in the Middle East. The evaluation was commissioned by SFCG and managed by the Institutional Learning and Research division of SFCG in Washington D.C.

According to the Terms of Reference, the goal of the evaluation was to “maximize the effectiveness of the programming and engage in continuous improvement and learning within programs and across the organization.” The Terms of Reference set out six specific evaluation questions focusing on projects’ relevance, results on target audience, sustainability, effectiveness, efficiency, and identification of benchmarks and/or critical factors. See Terms of Reference in Annex 1 for more details.

Since 1982, SFCG, an international non-governmental organization, has been working to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial confrontation towards cooperative solutions. After the escalation of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in 2001-2002, SFCG decided to start promoting non-violence through tools like media, education in schools and training in democracy.

A special program “Support for Local Initiatives for Non-Violent Conflict Resolution” (NVCR), known as “Moderate Voices,” was established in September 2002 through a grant from USAID and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) to start promoting non-violence in the area. The goals of the NVCR program were:

- To promote *moderation, dialogue, tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution and reduce incitement* by working with Palestinian Civil Society organizations (CSOs) that have the interest, know-how and desire to carry out non-violent peace-oriented strategies;
- To *strengthen CSOs so they can act as advocates for citizens’ interests* according to democratic and participatory principles.

Two projects in the NVCR program were chosen out of 18 projects in total, for the evaluation: the 13-episode drama series, “Seriously Joking” (*Mazah fi Jad*) produced by a local network of independent TV-stations in the West Bank, and the Student Government

project implemented by a long-time partner of SFCG, the Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR) in the Gaza Strip.

The above projects have been assessed in terms of relevance to the overall objective of ‘promoting moderation and dialogue through strengthening Palestinian CSOs so that they act as advocates for citizens’ interests’ as well according to their efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

The evaluation collected data and information from stakeholders and external resource persons; more than 40 individual interviews were conducted and several focus group discussions were held, with a total of 200 beneficiaries consulted. A limited survey of the potential audience for the TV series was conducted in three geographical locations to get an indicator on how many watch the series (see Annex 3).

The main findings, conclusions, and recommendations are presented below. First for the TV Drama series, secondly for the Student Government project, and thirdly for the NVCR program and SFCG.

## 1.1 TV Drama

### Findings

The *drama series* was successfully produced in time and according to the plans. The TV series production capacity of Maan network was undoubtedly substantially increased. However, the TV series did not succeed fully to reach a wide audience in the first screening of the drama series. This was due to several factors among them insufficient marketing and high competition in the field of drama series during the month of Ramadan.

The project objectives for the TV drama were partially fulfilled. The ambitions were high compared to what could realistically be achieved. The second project objective aimed to “*reduce violent incidents in Palestinian society by application of non-violent techniques of conflict resolution through changing knowledge, attitudes, and behavior*” is quite ambitious for a pioneer local TV production. A media intervention like drama series might influence and set the agenda locally, but due to the nature and complexity of what causes violence in Palestinian society, the Evaluation team was unable to see that this drama series had an effect on reducing the overall level of violence. Nevertheless drama series, as tools for civic

education are positive tools towards addressing internal social and political issues in society. The lack of a basis for surveying the dramas' audience and/or potential viewers, made the Evaluation unable to draw conclusions on whether the drama series had an effect on changing people's attitudes, knowledge and behavior.

The project could contribute *even more* to changing some attitudes if it was linked to other projects such as the Student Government project and similar interventions by other institutions (opportunities of synergies between different interventions). The two projects subject to this evaluation were however implemented with separate management arrangements and in three completely different locations (Nablus, Bethlehem, and Gaza) with limited synergy between them.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

1. Despite lack of proper pre-planning and financial shortcoming in budgets, Maan managed to produce and finalize the drama series in time.

*Recommendation:* Ensure that key stakeholders (director, producer, location director, chief camera, sound actors) and professional drama production consultants are involved in the detailed planning process, including budgeting.

2. Selection of appropriate broadcasting timing and good marketing plan seem to be crucial elements in reaching out to large number of viewers and consequently the success of the drama series. The drama series was broadcasted during Ramadan period, which seemed to affect the percentage of viewers. In addition the short marketing period seemed to be not enough in advertising the series.

*Recommendation:* Develop a marketing plan (with budget) for the new drama series including innovative ways of attracting viewers, follow-up activities (competitions, phone-in answers etc) and monitoring mechanisms and continue to promote "Seriously Joking" for broadcast on Arab satellites.

3. The production crew had limited or no previous experience in drama series. They were given a short period to prepare and develop a shared communication language and learn to work together as a team. These issues created some obstacles and prolonged the production process.

*Recommendation:* Spend time on the teambuilding of the production crew in order for



them to get to know each other, develop joint terms, build team spirit, develop a common language, and ensure a proper distribution of roles and responsibilities. If budget allows, professional training in another country with good experience can help the team to improve their skills in this particular field.

4. The story level of complexity and excitement was highly criticized by all informants for being dull, but all informants had different ideas on how it could be improved. In general, some episodes were seen more like educational messages rather than drama stories, and seemed to not being able to capture the imagination and attention of viewers.

*Recommendation:* Develop a stronger drama stories which challenges the imagination of the viewers and provoke their thinking as well as provoke them to act on the solutions. The drama writers in Palestine are few, and it may be worth to organize further training in drama writing.

5. Too many script-writers weakened the consistency of the story and characters. It also meant extra work in the production process as amendments were made continuously.

*Recommendation:* Have one, or maximum two, scriptwriter(s), or one writer and an assistant.

6. Role of Advisory Board was not well identified during the production of the series. According to some of the interviewed board members their mandate with regards to the production process was not clear. The board met a few times and discussed, but gave no tangible contributions to the episodes. Members of the production crew confirmed the lack of clarity of the board's role.

*Recommendation:* Re-consider the need for an Advisory board and/or consider having an advisory board on technical production and focus groups on the content communication. The composition of focus groups should reflect the target group.

7. The drama series fostered and trained a new generation of drama production team and actors.

*Recommendation:* Preserve and further develop the best actors and production team from the drama series for the next drama; at the same time continue to use auditions and open

competition among amateur and professional actors.

8. Management at Maan developed greatly during the process of the drama production towards being more sensitive and responsive to the needs of the production crew.

*Recommendation:* Maan is encouraged to continue the valuable process of decentralization and empowering the creative team in production, including giving a larger role for the Board of Directors.

## 1.2 Student Government

### Findings

The Student Government (SG) project established arenas for youth to exercise democracy enjoy free expression, and participate in improving practical and important aspects of their own lives, whether regarding education or security in their schools.

The SG project had a positive effect on the target group. More than 500 students were trained and mobilized as direct beneficiaries, and several thousand students were indirect beneficiaries. There was a significant difference between students exposed to the project activities and peers not exposed in terms of eloquence of elaborating ideas and concepts of free speech, democracy and their own needs. This was confirmed by a mid-term evaluation conducted by the implementing organization (PCDCR). Interviewed stakeholders such as students, teachers and staff of the PCDCR, expressed satisfaction and enthusiasm to proceed with the project even without external funding. This provides a good opportunity for wider outreach and sustainability if institutionalized in the schools by the Ministry of Education.

The evaluation found cases of advocacy activities by students who had intervened with decision-makers to correct unsatisfactory conditions of their schools (crowdedness, lack of security). To the evaluation team, such acts demonstrate that the students have not only received training and increased their knowledge, but also managed to act decisively based on their knowledge.

The SG project contributed to demonstrate a new model towards changing the traditional

student and teacher relation, with SG members often working as mediators between teachers and students or between students.

The extent which the students' attitudes and behavior have been changed in the long run depend on the external environment they are living in, summed up in three circles: family, school, and society. As an illustration of the above: if parents and other family members in the close circle around the student are not prepared and ready to accept the change on youth character and behavior after being a member of the Student Government, this could lead to frustration, and possibly withdrawal and exclusion.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Student Government has, during its 13.5 months of implementation, created an important arena for free expression, participation, and democracy for youth and students. The project succeeded to address wide spectrum of students which expressed a desire to continue the project and/or expand it into a long-term program.

*Recommendation:* For wider effect in the society, it is worthwhile to explore chances for expanding the project to include:

- ✓ More lobbying and advocacy work from the side of PCDCR with the Ministry of Education and UNRWA to integrate the project model as extra-curricular activities in the schools.
  - ✓ Expand to other areas, especially rural areas and refugee camps in the south and North of Gaza and rural areas of Nablus region.
  - ✓ Utilize the resources that have been mobilized for expansion like the principal and teachers who volunteer to train other supervising committees and to set up the project in other schools.
  - ✓ Organize regular meetings for the involved schools' supervision committees to exchange information and experience. Reflect on the project's weaknesses and strengths and make recommendations to develop the project idea.
2. Changing attitudes and behaviors of patriarchy, lack of tolerance for youth's participation is a long-term process. Changing attitudes involves the whole society and environment surrounding the youth. This change includes, besides the teachers, the family as well.

*Recommendation:* Prolong the period of the project to at least three years. The project needs to develop mechanisms that address parents and family of the youth in order to assist them in accepting and supporting the youth. Parents' council could be one option, and/or reaching parents through media.

3. The project was not visible enough in the local media in Gaza, while in Nablus the SG was more visible and had better cooperation with media. The existence of local television in Nablus helped, while in Gaza local TV-stations did not exist at the time of the project implementation.

*Recommendation:* The project is encouraged to use media more actively, especially in Gaza, which has a weaker distribution of other media (like newspapers, local TV-stations, radios).

4. The project played a positive role in changing the traditional student-teacher relationship in the targeted schools. Involvement in the project activities have contributed to better school performance among students, especially in the civic education classes.

*Recommendation:* The project could capitalize more on the opportunities for improving school environments (especially for schools experiencing violence and disturbance) in order to "sell" the project to more schools.

5. Project focused mostly on public issues and political concerns like lawlessness, chaos of security forces (*infilat al-amni*), and education. There was less focus on students and adolescence youths' particular emotional, social, and physical needs as pointed out by several of the student informants. A professional psychologist pointed out a potential danger if there is a large "gap" between the complicated topics raised by project and the level of the students' personal character.

*Recommendation:* Project activities could benefit from balancing between political/social issues and other needs in this age, such as; intellectual, mental, and sexuality needs which could contribute in developing the self-confidence of the adolescent (this point is especially valid for young girls).

6. PCDCR had limited cooperation and networking with other local organizations working within the fields of youth and children's development. Although PCDCR has a strong

cooperation with local educational authorities, this cooperation and networking did not extend to other NGOs that work in the same field and have developed similar activities in the schools.

*Recommendation:* The effectiveness and outcome of the project would most likely increase if PCDCR extended its networking and cooperation with other local initiatives for youth's participation and influence.

### 1.3 NVCR Program and SFCG

#### Findings

Both projects were successful in implementing the planned activities in time. For both projects the expected outputs were accomplished in accordance with the plans and donors requirements. The rigidity of the milestones reporting system and the relatively short implementation period did affect the quality of one of the planned outputs (the drama series project).

In summary the two projects serve as important contributions to achieving the overall objective "to promote moderation, dialogue, tolerance, and non-violent conflict resolution and reduce incitement by working with Palestinian Civil Society organizations." With the prevailing violent atmosphere and harsh living conditions surrounding the Palestinian people there is always a risk that these changes in attitudes and behaviours can quickly change due to unexpected violent events. The situation in the Middle East is known for being highly volatile. Often a minor spark can ignite violent reactions. Unless the overall situation changes, there can be no guarantees for long-lasting effects of these projects (see 6.1 for further elaboration on this issue).

The overall assessment of SFCG's follow-up procedures of the projects within the NVCR is good, especially with the long-term partner in Gaza, PCDCR. SFCG staff provided support and freedom to the local partner to implement their activities without much interference. However, SFCG office in Jerusalem (SFCGJ) lacks consistent follow-up mechanisms like regular monitoring the progress of the overall program. Each team member in SFCGJ seems to be working on their individual projects according to donor requirements and less as a team working towards a joint vision. The office could benefit from working on developing its own profile, clarifying its role and value-added in the area. In addition, SFCGJ could explore

further ways of developing a more comprehensive partnership approach to the cooperation with the Palestinian organizations.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The goals and objectives of NVCR were good, but not fully developed and properly placed in an analytical situational context.

*Recommendation:* SFCG could consider revisiting the goals and objectives of the NVCR program to make a stronger focus on the goals that are achievable within the existing political/social situation in Palestinian society.

2. More than half of the funds of the NVCR program have been channeled to intended outcome drama series in radio and television (mainly through MEND and Maan network) without systems of audience ratings, research on potential audience/viewers, or baseline surveys of viewers' changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.

*Recommendation:* SFCG should encourage cooperation between the local partners who work within media production in order to strengthen the measuring of percentage changes in audience attitudes and comprehension of message. SFCG could also explore option of contracting independent media research institutes to do baseline surveys before and after the media intervention.

3. SFCG in Jerusalem is a small office with a significant work load. It lacks institutionalization of routines for project follow-up (except financial) and partnership approaches. With well-established organizations like PCDCR, the lack of routines is not a problem, but with less established institutes like Maan, it is a challenge.

*Recommendation:* strengthen the capacity and competence in SFCGJ for following up with local partners

4. The role, responsibilities, and mandate of the SFCG media consultant for the drama series were not clear to the local television station or SFCGJ.

*Recommendation:* SFCGJ should clarify the role of the media consultant through an active dialogue and communication with the local partner.

5. SFCG in Jerusalem is not visible enough among the local partners. The donors in the two projects evaluated (AED and USAID) are better known.

*Recommendation:* SFCG and its partners should take the opportunity to disseminate more information about SFCG's missions in other parts of the world in order to promote exchanges of lessons learned.

6. The conflict creates polarization in all aspects of operations in Israel and Palestine, also for international organizations working with both Israelis and Palestinians. So far it seems that SFCG has handled that in a balanced way, but with a frequent turnover of staff in the Jerusalem office, it could easily change. If SFCG continues to work on changing attitudes inside Palestinian society, the organization is dependent on enjoying trust and confidence among a wide range of local Palestinian organizations and civil society. This implies a need to focus more on the composition of staff when recruiting new staff in the office, like recruiting more people close to and among the target group of the projects.

*Recommendation:* SFCG could consider expanding beyond the seven organizations it has supported in the NVCR program and employing more Palestinians in order to reach out to other networks and links in the Palestinian civil society including media and politics/academia.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Overview of report**

The report is divided in seven chapters. The first chapter provides an Executive Summary of the report with main findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The second chapter outlines the objective and scope of the evaluation as well as explaining the Approach and Methodology chosen in the work. The third chapter provides a short background to Search for Common Ground and its work in the Middle East, including the program evaluated “Support for Local Initiatives for Non-Violent Conflict Resolution.” An overview of the projects a) Television Drama Series, and b) Student Government, is given in chapter four. In the fifth chapter the main findings of the evaluation are presented for each project, while in chapter six an overall assessment is given with regards to their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Finally, chapter seven sets out the Conclusions and Recommendations provided in the Executive Summary.

There are seven annexes: Terms of Reference, List of the persons and institutions consulted during the field survey, Summary of Viewers survey, Activity Table of the Student Government project and the Palestinian curriculum flowchart questions developed by one of the external consultants of SFCG. A list of literature is included in annex 6 and in annex 7 there is a short biography of the evaluators.

### **2.2 Objective and Scope of Evaluation**

This report presents the outcome of an evaluation undertaken by Nordic Consulting Group (NCG), Norway. The subject for the evaluation has been the activities undertaken in the Middle East by two Palestinian organizations supported by Search for Common Ground (SFCG).

The evaluation has been commissioned by SFCG and managed by the Institutional Learning and Research division of SFCG in Washington D.C, represented by DME Specialist, Alice Rowley.

The evaluation team consisted of Hanan Boudart, evaluation and monitoring specialist, and



Nora Ingdal (team leader) development consultant, journalist and specialist on the Middle East and Arab world. Jens Claussen, senior economist from Nordic Consulting Group, assisted in developing the methodology and provided quality assurance to the process.

According to the Terms of Reference the goal of the evaluation was to “maximize the effectiveness of the programming and engage in continuous improvement and learning within programs and across the organization.”

The Terms of Reference also set out six specific evaluation questions focusing on projects’ relevance, results on target audience, sustainability, effectiveness, efficiency, and identification of benchmarks and/or critical factors (see Annex 1).

## 2.3 Approach & Methodology

The evaluation team has performed individual assessments of selected projects as input to the overall assessment of the program with focus on:

- The results and outcomes of the two projects: drama series “Seriously Joking” produced by Maan network and the project “Student Government” implemented by Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR)
- The relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of these projects
- The potentially long-lasting effects [sustainability] of these projects

The evaluation process was divided into four phases: preparatory, field survey, analysis and report writing and final report writing.

The preparatory phase commenced in late October 2005 with the review of project documents and development of an Approach and Methodological Paper (AMP) outlining the framework around the evaluation with detailed indicators for both outputs and outcomes, means of verification and methodological tools. The AMP was presented to SFCG which provided input and comments. Based upon the discussion with SFCG an updated version of the AMP was adopted as a working document.

It was agreed between NCG and SFCG that the timeframe for the evaluation (2 weeks fieldwork for two projects) did not allow for a study of the impact of the projects. An assessment of the outputs and results, however, served as indicators of the overall outcome of

the program.

The second phase of the evaluation was conducted as a field survey in West Bank and Gaza which took place from 6-19 November 2005. During this phase consultations were held with relevant stakeholders and external resource persons; more than 40 individual interviews were conducted in addition to focus groups with a total of approximately 200 beneficiaries. A limited survey of the potential audience for the TV-series was conducted in three geographical locations to get indicators on knowledge of the project. The most important interviews like those of directors and coordinators of the two implementing partner organizations as well as the director and coordinator of SFCG were recorded. Written summaries of meetings with focus groups and observations were produced afterwards.

Choice of methodology for collecting information was done according to an analysis of obtaining maximum information at minimal time and resources. Focus groups are the most efficient method of accessing information in a cost-efficient way. At the same time members of focus groups tend to be more open and “daring” than members interviewed on individual levels. For key stakeholders such as directors of the two implementing organizations in-depth structured interviews with questions prepared before-hand were chosen as a method whereby there is a chance to expand questions further and dwell on complex issues.

The limited time made available for the field survey did not allow for conducting a comprehensive survey of potential audience and target group for the television series or a comprehensive study of the knowledge, attitudes, and behavior among students in Student Government project. However, a limited survey was done in the streets of Hebron, Ramallah, and Tulkarem. It should be noted that the survey of Tulkarem was done after the joint field survey of the evaluation team, but under the auspices of the team member. A summary of the sources of information from the fieldwork is presented below:

Focus groups:

- 3 supervising committees (Nablus, Gaza, Nusseirat).
- 36 members of Student Government in Nusseirat Girls School.
- 35 members of Student Government in Zafer al-Masri Girls School in Nablus
- 30 students not participating in SG in both Gaza and Nablus.
- 2 group meetings with 10-12 parents in Nablus and Gaza.
- Actors and production crew of drama series.
- 2 groups of potential viewers in restaurants (Hebron & Ramallah).

In-depth, structured interviews:

- Key stakeholders in both projects: directors, program coordinators.
- Educational cooperating partners: UNRWA, Palestinian Ministry of Education.
- Head masters and head mistresses, teachers and supervisors.

Consultations with external sources:

- External media experts.
- Experts on public opinion and attitudes towards democratization.
- Politicians and decision-makers within judicial and executive authorities.
- Psychologist and specialists on working with youth and children.

Randomized survey of viewers:

- Questionnaires were distributed among viewers chosen randomly in different locations: in street, by newsstand, market, taxi, buses, and restaurants and among neighbors. (See Annex 3 for Viewers Survey).
- 114 potential viewers in three different geographical localities in West Bank (Hebron, Ramallah, and Tulkarem).

Document reviews:

- Project documents, milestone reports, contracts, materials prepared by Student Government, students' evaluation forms, mid-term evaluation, project publications (manuals, newsletters, school newspaper).
- Secondary literature, internet resources, media reports on projects (see Annex 6 for Literature Reviewed)

Observation:

- Students' meetings with decision-makers.
- Students' unified government conference.
- TV production crew discussion.

Others:

- Watching drama series.
- Viewers' comments and feedback in phone calls received by local television stations.

In the Analysis and Report writing phase, all material, recorded interviews, and memos were analyzed and verified. The data analyses on the selected indicators were based on research of the project documents, inputs from key informants including beneficiary samples, organizations staff, independent professional, and other existing secondary resources such as general surveys and studies in the field of media, youth, and conflict resolution. This methodology uses factual information and allows examination of various opinions, as well as multiple checks of data (triangulation) and information for the purpose of comparison and verification.

A draft report was circulated to SFCG. Feedback and comments were received on the draft report. In the final phase these comments and some additional information which was lacking from SFCG was included in the final report. An Arabic translation of the Executive Summary was included in the final copy.

## 3. BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Search for Common Ground

Since 1982, SFCG, an international non-governmental organization, has been working to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial confrontation, towards cooperative solutions. According to the SFCG philosophy the aim is to “understand differences,” but “act on commonalities.”

SFCG is engaged in a long-term process of incremental transformation, and make long-term commitments. SFCG currently works in or with fifteen countries: Angola, Belgium, Burundi, D.R. Congo, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Liberia, Macedonia, Middle East (with offices in Jerusalem and Amman), Morocco, Sierra Leone, Turkey, Ukraine, and the USA. The SFCG “toolbox” includes mediation/facilitation training, community organizing, radio/TV, journalism, sports, drama, and music.

Between 2002 and 2004, SFCG’s Middle East program was managed by two key figures in the organization, Executive Vice President Susan Collin Marks and founder and President John Marks, by coming back and forth to Israel/Palestine. After the escalation of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in 2001/2, SFCG started examining their work and exploring how it could contribute towards transforming the conflict. Several ideas were floated, but there was agreement on one issue: the need to focus on media as a tool for promoting non-violence. SFCG met resistance from both parties. Some Israeli responses felt that SFCG was teaching Palestinians new techniques for fighting against them, while some Palestinian reactions were hesitant and suspicious of the motives behind “why should we give up our legitimate struggle.” SFCG stressed that their goal was not to tell the parties *how* the conflict could be solved, but to encourage non-violent techniques for dealing with it.<sup>1</sup>

SFCG imported the documentary series “*A Force More Powerful*,”<sup>2</sup> which explores how non-violence was used by leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and in other situations like the massive popular uprising against Serb leaders, and succeeded in overcoming oppression and

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with key staff in SFCG Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Homepage: [www.aforcemorepowerful.org](http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org)

authoritarian rule. The documentary was aired on the Maan TV-network in January 2003. In 2004, SFCG produced a documentary entitled “*The Shape of the Future*,”<sup>3</sup> which was aired simultaneously in Hebrew in Israel and in Arabic on the public Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) and Maan network.

### 3.2 Non-Violence Conflict Resolution Program

A special program<sup>4</sup>, “Support for Local Initiatives for Non-Violent Conflict Resolution” (NVCR), also known as “Moderate Voices” was established in September 2002 through a grant from USAID and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) to start promoting non-violence in the area. Unlike the “Shape of the Future,” the NVCR program targeted mainly the Palestinian side and not both sides’ “common ground” as previously.

The overall goals of the NVCR program were:

- a) to promote moderation, dialogue, tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution and reduce incitement by working with Palestinian Civil Society organizations (CSOs) that have the interest, know-how and desire to carry out non-violent peace-oriented strategies;
- b) To strengthen CSOs so they can act as advocates for citizen interests according to democratic and participatory principles.

The immediate objectives of the NVCR program include:

- Strengthen administrative and financial skills and capacities of Palestinian CSOs to implement non-violent conflict resolution oriented projects;
- Create relevant and strategic partnerships between CSOs to more effectively implement NVCR projects;
- Increase technical skill level of Palestinian CSOs to create conflict resolution messages, encourage socially responsible journalism, empower civil society and teach conflict resolution and non-violence skills;
- Increase citizen, particularly youth, participation in NVCR projects in order to foster the use of democratic principles and conflict resolution skills.

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<sup>3</sup> Homepage: [www.theshapeofthefuture.tv](http://www.theshapeofthefuture.tv)

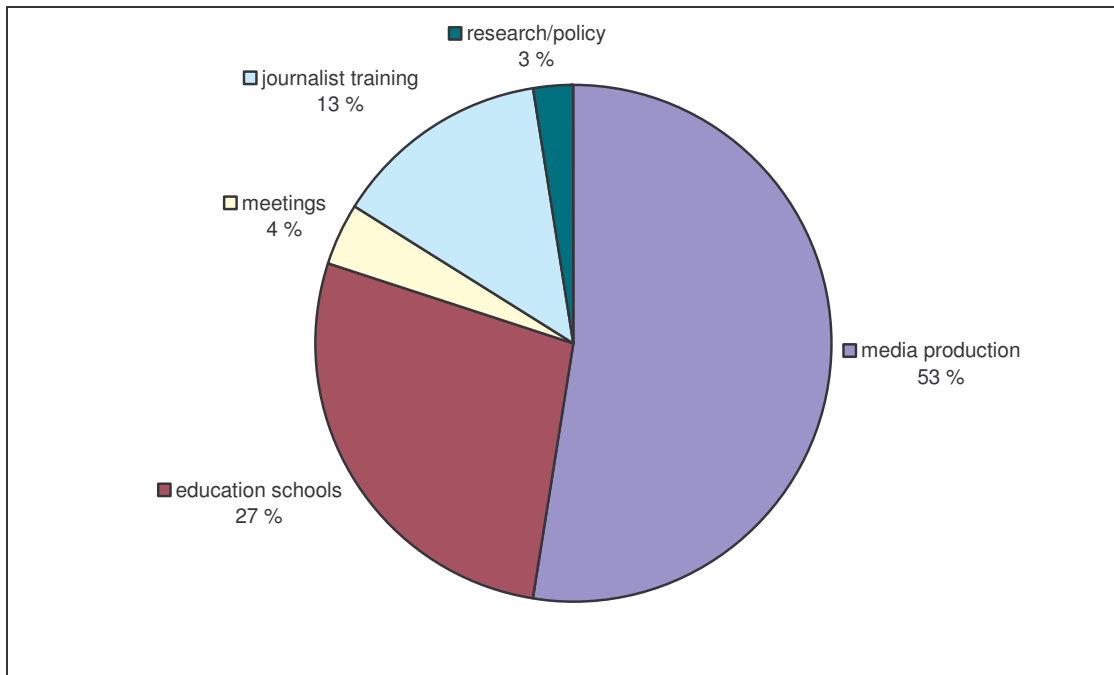
<sup>4</sup> SFCG use both “program” and “project” about the NVCR. This report has chosen to use the term “program” for the NVCR, while the projects supported within the NVCR are referred to as “projects”.

Since 2002 until 2005, the NVCR program has financed 18 projects ranging from \$5,896 to \$183,834 with 12 of them \$50,000 or less. Activities have targeted children, youth, and young adults in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Gaza and there has been an emphasis on the use of media, particularly radio and television, as educational instruments.

In addition to the two projects subject to the evaluation, SFCG has supported 16 different projects within the NVCR program. The 18 projects have been implemented by eight different organizations:

- Seven projects with Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy (MEND)
- Two projects with the Israeli-Palestinian Center for Research and Information (IPCRI)
- Four projects with the Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR)
- One project with Bethlehem Television
- One project with the network One Voice
- One project with The Center for Applied Research and Education (CARE)
- One project with The Palestinian Center for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (CCRR)
- One project with the Mustaqbal (*Future*) Foundation.

The total amount invested in the 18 projects is around one million US dollars. Thematically the projects can be divided in five categories; support for media-production, educational initiatives in schools, research and policy, seminars/public meeting and training of journalists. Figure 1 below presents the allocation of financial support to the various categories.

**Figure 1 – Distribution of SFCG support to projects 2002-2005**

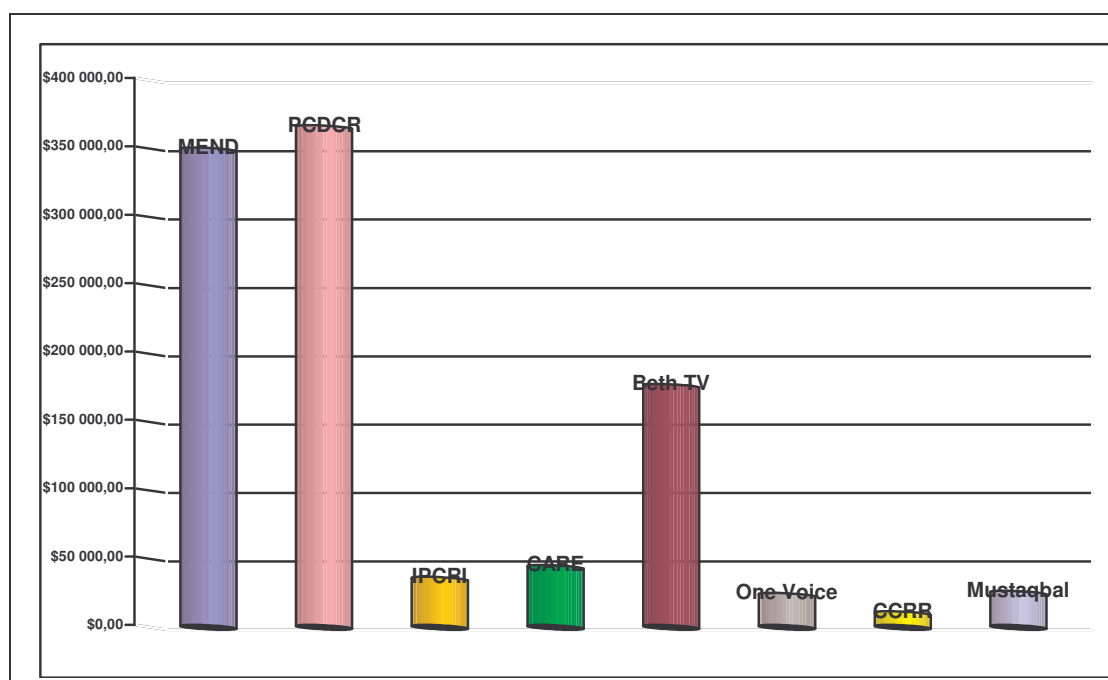
As seen in Figure 1, more than half of the funds (53%) have been channelled to producing radio and television dramas, while a little less than one third of the funds have been invested in educational initiatives in schools, among them the Student Government, but also a peer-mediation program in Gaza schools.

In US dollar terms, the Gaza-based Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution has been the largest receiver of funds under the NVCR programme, while the Jerusalem-based organization Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy have been the second largest recipient of funds (see Figure 2).

The support for MEND has been channelled into producing radio “soap operas.” Since December 2002 until October 2005, MEND has produced three seasons of 26 episodes of radio soap operas, in total 78 episodes that have been broadcasted in 2003, 2004 and 2005. Funds have also gone to training of trainers and market research for the radio series and training of journalists.

The third largest recipient of funds in the NVCR programme is the Bethlehem Television which produced the TV drama series “Seriously Joking” in cooperation with the Maan Network, which is the subject of this evaluation.



**Figure 2 - Distribution of funds according to the organizations (in USD)**

Geographically there are a higher number of projects being implemented in the West Bank than in Gaza. The television productions have not been able to reach Gaza due to lack of local TV stations in Gaza, while the radio soap operas are reported to have reached Gaza.<sup>5</sup> One of the members of the Maan Network, Al-Amal TV, states that their broadcasts can reach Gaza, but it was not verified to which extent people in Gaza actually watch the Amal TV. However, this is an issue that deserves further investigation.

The geographical distribution of the funds according to where the implementing organization is based and where the projects were implemented:

- 15 of the projects have been implemented by organizations based in the West Bank
- 3 projects have been implemented by PCDCR for the Gaza population

<sup>5</sup> The soap operas produced by MEND were not evaluated. Information about the project was received by SFCG in Jerusalem.

In financial resources the distribution of funds has been:

- 33% of the funds (\$340 496) has been channelled to projects targeting the population in Gaza while the remaining 67% (\$688 000) has been channelled to projects targeting the population in the West Bank.

The financial resources invested in the two areas almost match those of the total population figures: 59% of the Palestinian population lives in the West Bank (around 2 million) and 41% of the population (1.4 million Palestinians) live in Gaza.

The major difference in the geographical distribution of the funds of the Non-Violence Conflict Resolution Programme, is that in the West Bank the funds have been divided among seven different NGOs and institutes while in Gaza, the funds have gone to building up and strengthening one local organization which was originally an integral part of SFCG (for more on the assessment of PCDCR' capacity, see Chapter 6).

### 3.3 Conflict Transformation

The two projects chosen for this evaluation were a 13-episode drama series, *Seriously Joking*, produced by a local network of independent TV-stations in the West Bank, and *Student Government* project implemented by a long-time partner of SFCG, Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Gaza.

Both projects are targeting the Palestinian society, and not joint Israeli-Palestinian issues. The link between common ground-projects and dealing only with the one side is explained by SFCG in the term *conflict transformation*. SFCG contends that what is needed in Israel/Palestine is not a traditional conflict resolution and/or conflict management, but to “transform the way the world deals with conflict by emphasizing cooperative solutions, pursued on a realistic scale and with practical means.”<sup>6</sup>

The use of media in conflict transformation is based on the idea that media is the most effective fashion of transmitting ideas. Thus when SFCG wanted to introduce social messages (non-violence, critical thinking, responsible behavior etc.) it was natural to build local production capacity by supporting the Maan network.

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<sup>6</sup> Quoted from SFCG Information Brochure, undated.

The project Student Government can also be seen in the conflict transformation perspective because it aims at “changing people’s mindsets from a zero-sum game thinking into something else” according to SFCG.<sup>7</sup>

The assumption is that the Student Government project will effect how youth think and deal with authorities by allowing them to sit face-to-face with decision-makers and authority persons whether at school or in the local community. By introducing the students to the concepts of government in a practical manner, the thinking is that in the long run students will behave differently when they grow up than what their parents do/did. This could assist in transforming the way Palestinians deal with conflict.

The Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution developed the Student Government project, but with some input from SFCG. However, the implementation has been the full responsibility of PCDCR.

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with SFCG Jerusalem key staff.

## 4. OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS

### 4.1 Television Drama Series

The drama series aimed at a Palestinian audience was conceived by SFCG, but developed in cooperation with the *Maan network* in 2004. The drama was based upon similar SFCG media-interventions in Macedonia and Cyprus.

The Maan (ma`an means together in Arabic) network of ten independent local TV stations based in the major cities in the West Bank<sup>8</sup> was established in 2002. According to their own program, Maan is dedicated to promoting understanding of the Palestinian situation by strengthening cooperation between local and international media. The Network shares a vision of promoting democracy and freedom of thought and ideas in Palestine. It uses both technical and academic expertise to achieve these goals and strives toward sustainable development and human rights for the Palestinian people, as well as greater understanding between people.

Cooperation between SFCG and Maan started in 2002 with the airing of “A Force More Powerful” documentary and the production of 26 talk shows about non-violent resistance. Both SFCG and Maan found a common interest in developing local production capacity for drama series as a means for communicating social messages, thus Maan was chosen as a cooperating partner under the NVCR program.

A nine-month contract of the amount of \$176,287 for producing 13 episodes of a drama series was signed in February 2005 with the donor Academy of Educational Development (funded by USAID) with SFCG as the technical partner for following up the project. Bethlehem TV, one of the founding members of Maan signed the contract on behalf of Maan.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Maan Network includes the following eleven independent Palestinian TV stations; Al- Amal TV in Hebron, Bethlehem TV in Bethlehem, Wattan TV in Ramallah (frozen membership in 2005), Al-Quds educational TV in El-Bireh, Pace TV in Nablus, Farah TV in Jenin, Al-Nour TV in Jericho, Al-Salam TV in Tulkarem, Qalqilya TV, Nablus TV and Ramattan Studios in Gaza.

<sup>9</sup> Bethlehem TV signed on behalf of Maan due to disputes in Maan’s Board of Directors regarding the terms

The contract had seven milestones and funds attached to each milestone since USAID operates on the basis of reimbursement of funds according to achievement of milestones. For example, milestone 3: episodes 1-3 filmed and scripts for episodes 4-9 drafted. While milestone 4 was episodes 3-9 filmed and scripts 10-13 drafted. The set-up this milestone system caused challenges for the production crew (see Findings 5.1).

The topics for the intended outcome drama were developed through gathering information from series of five (supposed to be six) focus groups held throughout the West Bank. Each focus group gathered 10 to 20 young adults, mostly at university campuses, which talked about issues that concerned them. The project coordinator attended the focus groups and took notes from each session. Later all the notes were gathered into one document which listed 16 different topics since the original plan was to produce 16 episodes (later reduced to 13).

A *Curriculum summit* was organized by SFCG in order to develop the story from the ideas' stage of 16 topics. Four writers were hired to write four episodes each. And a project Advisory Board was set-up to guide and advice in reviewing the script for the drama.

A crew of 32 people was recruited: actors by audition and technical team through profession and availability. The drama was shot at various locations in Bethlehem.

The drama series was broadcast during 13 nights in Ramadan at 6 o' clock (right after the *iftar* meal) when families usually are gathered in front of the TV.

## 4.2 Student Government

The *Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution* (PCDCR) was formally registered in 1998, but had worked several years before that, amongst other, with SFCG in the Peer Mediation Program in which students learn how to act as mediators to solve the problems of their peers through peaceful and non-violent means.

The Center has grown rapidly from a staff of three persons in 1999 to 55 staff in 2005 located in three different offices in Gaza, Khan Younis, and Nablus. The main office is in Gaza city.

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and conditions of the grant.

The *Student Government* project was developed solely and planned by PCDCR, but borrowed some concepts from similar projects in the world such as USA and UK. After the project was approved by AED and USAID a contract was signed with PCDCR for a period of 13, 5 months.

In the preparation phase a *Steering Committee* consisting of the PCDCR staff, Ministry of Education, PLC members, UNRWA, and lawyers was set up. In the schools, the project started by UNRWA and MoE identifying which schools were motivated to participate. After that a Supervision Committee was formed in each school consisting of the headmaster/mistress, school counselor and an active teacher. The committee's role was to monitor, supervise, facilitate, and assist the school government work.

Furthermore an Awareness Campaign was held in every school to declare the start of the project, explain to students and teachers the purpose of the project, its activities, and its objectives. The awareness activities included meeting with teachers, morning announcements, distributing brochures, signs, and posters to motivate students to participate in the project.

Two manuals were planned to be developed, the first for theoretical reference materials about theories, concepts, and practices of democracy, governance system, authorities' relations, and elections process. The manual was printed and distributed as a reference to teachers and students. The second manual was planned to be developed tenth month after the start of the implementation period of the project and should contain practical examples from the project experience. According to the plans 1900 copies of the two manuals should be distributed to supervision committees and students. However at time of report-writing only the first manual was printed and distributed

Elections were held to choose the parliament members. The election process allowed each level of the school to elect peers at the same level. The elections were held on annual basis. The school students elected 35 students for the parliamentary elections. Twenty four students formed the school parliament and eleven formed the government in 16 schools. In addition, another ten students were nominated at a later stage by the government and approved by the parliament. This was meant to represent the judicial system of the school.

The elected students at each school received a training course of twenty five hours. A total of

400 training hours conducted in sixteen schools. The government and parliament conducted meetings with students' constituency, and implemented their activities in accordance with the students' needs. The role of the members of the student government was to assist the students in the school to express their needs, interest, and concerns.

Ten students were nominated for the judicial system. Their role was to intervene in students disputes using none-violent approaches such as mediation and arbitration to solve emerging school conflict. After the judicial body was selected, they received training on concepts and principles of intervention and mediation as well as conflict resolution techniques.

#### Out of School Activities:

- United Government Formation: was formed with two representatives from each school government. They met once a month during the summer holidays.
- Public Government Training: Advanced training of 30 training hours for the united government body to broaden their understanding of democracy and human rights concepts.
- Skill building retreat: Four skill building retreats were conducted, three in Gaza, one in West bank. A total of 600 student participated in the retreats
- Final Conference: A Final Conference was held at the end of the project activities in both Gaza and Nablus. The Student Government representatives, the interested public, as well as members of government and non governmental organizations were invited to attend the conference. The conference reviewed the achievements, challenges, and obstacles they overcome in the project. This activity was observed by the evaluation team.

During November 2004 - to November 2005 the project was implemented in 16 schools; 4 in Nablus and 12 in Gaza Strip (see Annex 5 for detailed activity table).

## 5. EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

### 5.1 Drama series “Seriously Joking”

#### Project description

The overall project goal of the drama series was “to raise awareness of the effectiveness of non-violent ways of resolving conflicts and to develop analytical and practical skills among Palestinian youth between 16 and 25 years old in the use of non-violence and the assumption of individual initiative and responsibility.”

The short-term objectives were defined as:

- Inform and educate the Palestinian community about non-violent ways of resolving conflicts.
- Reduce violent incidents in Palestinian society by application of non-violent techniques of conflict resolution through changing:
  - Knowledge (through presenting positive role models and teaching non-violent conflict resolution skills);
  - Attitude (by promoting belief in individual initiative and responsibility for one’s actions); and
  - Behavior (individual use of non-violent conflict resolution skills in daily life).

Planned outputs:

- A 13 part Palestinian TV drama.
- A production and creative team trained in the type of production.
- Better developed production capacities of independent TV stations in the Palestinian territories.

#### Main findings

13 episodes of the TV Drama series *Mazah fi Jad* (seriously joking) were produced. The story was developed around the daily life and doings of the children of two Palestinian Muslim families and one Palestinian Christian family. The geographical setting was mainly in the Bethlehem area. Many social issues related to love; marriage and traditions versus modernity in family affairs were addressed. In addition more controversial issues like high unemployment, the impact of nepotism and corruption, and the challenges of youth’s decisions to emigrate abroad in search of a better life. For Bethlehem and the Palestinian



Christian community this is seen as a particular relevant and difficult topic.

The project succeeded in implementing all major outputs.

- A unique Palestinian drama series, one of the first of its kind in the West Bank. A repeated statement heard from people who had seen the drama was “Is it Palestinian? I thought it was produced in Syria or outside because we Palestinians do not know how to produce drama series.” This comment could be ascribed to the absence of “typical” Palestinian features in the drama (occupation, soldiers and checkpoints), which made the drama more universal in transmitting social messages which could have taken place almost anywhere.
- Relatively high quality of the drama: verified by evaluators’ assessment and comments from people working in drama and theatre.
- Relatively good technical quality, shooting locations and set, camera and sound, décor and costumes are attractive.
- Actors were convincing with a good mix of professional and younger, less experienced actors. Amateur actors benefited greatly from more experienced actors. Some talents were discovered.



*One of the Maan Network's member stations is the Amal TV in Hebron. Amal TV has good capacity and competence in producing local journalistic news, documentaries and commercials.*

Training of production and creative team was verified through the fact that the Maan network had no previous experience in the field of drama production. Such experience in the field of drama series production in the Palestine is almost non-existing. Maan went through the whole production as an experimental project and a pilot.

The director had previously worked with theatre, the photographer had previously worked with documentary series, the script writers had written for theatre and comedies, but none had previously worked with drama.

Among the few in the crew who had some experience from drama production was the assistant producer who had studied in Egypt and worked with a well-known director.

The production crew was open and transparent towards the evaluation team about their weaknesses and challenges. That is an indicator that the crew has matured and is able to learn from mistakes that took place during the production. As pointed out by the Maan team themselves, the lack of experience led to a wide range of obstacles in all three phases: pre-

production, production, and post-production.

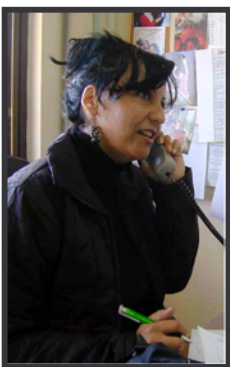
The main obstacles identified in the *pre-production phase* were related to inadequate planning:

- The proposal and budget submitted for funding was not comprehensive and realistic. The crew explained this by weak participation of drama consultants and/or experienced producers in the planning process.
- Insufficient survey of existing skills and production capabilities within the field of drama before starting. Thus there was a limited participation in planning process to Bethlehem-area, except for the script-writers.

Related to the inadequate planning, was the process of script-writing



Assistant producer (Rifaat Adi): -Few of the writers had previous experience; they did not understand the issue of scenario-writing. Such writing has its own grammar, scenes, sets, sound, and décor. When we received the text it was without any plot or structure (*Habka*) and it was without a logic set-up of the characters. Sometimes one character would be a nice person in one episode, but in the next episode he was a mean character.



Program coordinator (Linda Banoura): -Some of the writers were still in the mood of writing like the films from 1948 with the traditional roles, the village chiefs (*mukhtars*), village settings etc. We wanted to move away from this old style and create a contemporary drama that people could identify with in today's situation.

Assistant producer: -We also wanted to move away from the traditional Palestinian theatre which is very focused on politics, even the clothing, we did not want people to be dressed in *jallabayas* and *keffiye*, but as girls and boys in the streets of Bethlehem in 2005.

There were many challenges related to developing the story.

- The *Curriculum summit* was one of SFCG's tools when producing intended outcome dramas. It was organized by SFCG for developing the story with one of their experts doing the training. Findings from interviews and consultations indicate that the outcome of the training was not optimal due to:

- Maan crew was not sufficiently prepared for the workshop, an ad-hoc Advisory Board had been composed (but later changed), information from focus groups were not organized.
- Gap between the intentions of SFCG and Maan regarding what kind of issues the drama should convey. Some of the questions identified in the Palestinian curriculum flowchart by the trainer were seen as appropriate and some were not.<sup>10</sup>
- *Too many script writers:* Four (4) writers were contracted to write 3 or 4 episodes each. Maan tried to train the writers and collect them for workshops, but still there was a challenge to get each writer to work on joint ideas, characters, and concepts. Multiple writers created inconsistencies in story. Some writers were not fully committed. In the end two writers wrote most of the scripts.
- *Role of Advisory board unclear:* The Advisory Board was planned to be composed of five people of educational specialists, development psychologists, sociologists, media professionals, conflict resolution professionals, and one or two member(s) of the target age group will take the lead in advising and validating the research work done by the researchers. The advisory board never played this role and met only twice. There were several reasons for the above:
  - Work was based on volunteerism from the Board's side. It might be that it was too much to ask from volunteers to read and comment on 13 episodes.
  - Synopsis was not finished in time for the Advisory Board to review.
  - Ad-hoc composition for first curriculum summit. It was not clear to the participants what was expected from them.
  - Second Advisory Board composition did not reflect the target group or Palestinian society in general (religious, age, camp/village/city etc).
  - Advisory board had no technical expertise and did not give relevant input.

In the *production phase* skills were greatly improved if one compares the first to the last shooting. Still there were some challenges pointed out:

- Crew professional interaction and use of unified production terminology: the team came

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<sup>10</sup> Questions such as "How can Palestinians learn how to make the right choices" and "How can Palestinians create a sense of hope for themselves?" were seen as less useful for developing the story due to some underlying assumptions in these questions. See Palestinian Curriculum Flowchart (excel-document) and 10 overarching questions. See also Annex 6.

from various media background, such as theater, news production, and cinema, but few only have had experience in drama series. Adding to the difficulty, the lack of time for the team to build itself, distribute tasks, and develop unified working method. Under the pressure of lack of time, experience and insufficient funds. It took time for the team to unify and use one approach and terminology for the drama series and to learn how to work as a team and develop a common language: between producer and director as well as between actors and camera man. The finding led to the recommendation of setting aside sufficient time for crew cooperation in the next phase of the drama production.

- Insufficient preparation period for the production crew; meetings, training and planning. They had to spend time discovering roles and responsibilities for each. Actors also did not have enough time to prepare for the character they were expected to play. This point seemed to be related to the fact that the script was not ready in sufficient time before shooting.
- Lack of equipment such as cameras and sound. A high-quality camera was purchased in the middle of the production.
- Location for shooting the scenes and decoration were not prepared and ready in time due to lack of previous preparations. Things were done in the last minute.
- Long working hours in order to meet deadlines milestones: the crew ended up working under stress and pressure of time.

Also the *post-production* phase of editing and producing the drama series was a great challenge to the crew due to lack of experience and time stress. According to the plan, an

intensive PR campaign was supposed to be implemented throughout Palestinian TV before the launch of the *broadcast*. The launch of the series was to be a national event. These activities were constrained by the following:

- Lack of adequate marketing and advertisement for the drama series. The series was only marketed during the last 10 days. The main reasons for this was that the production was under such stress that the management was not certain that they would finish in time for the Ramadan screening and thus did not take the chance to advertise.
- A marketing plan was already prepared by Maan management.

However the lack of sufficient financial resources, time, and advertising materials (such as commercial spots) made executing the marking plan difficult. Contributing factors to



Director Raeda Ghazale and actor Nicola Zrieneh both agree that the production team should have had more time for preparing before shooting the drama series.

the lack of media coverage and marketing seems to be the over charged and exhausted crew when they finished the production and had little time and energy left for pushing for promotional work.

- Advertisements in newspapers were done at the last minute and the flash-marketing on the local TV stations did not mention the time of broadcast.
- Timing of broadcasting was chosen for Ramadan, which is the high season for drama series and soap operas in the Arab world. There is a high level of competition with the satellite channels who invest large resources in marketing their series.
- There was insufficient media coverage of the series, for example the director or the crew were not interviewed in any main newspapers or TV channels to speak about the dram series. Only Maan's own news networks brought news about *Seriously Joking*.

## Mapping of change

When working with media as a tool for processing change in people's attitudes, knowledge and behavior, a main topic of interest is to measure if and how the intended change is taking place, i.e. how the drama series have affected the audience.

Having worked with these issues for many years, SFCG is well aware of the methodological difficulties attached to such measurements. As noted by one of SFCG's leading experts on intended outcome drama:

*"The program strives to increase knowledge WHILE trying affect attitude and while leading to changes in behavior. It does not assume that BY increasing audience knowledge, the audience's attitudes and behavior will also change. It is assumed, however, that absence of knowledge is one factor in the audience's current attitudes and behavior and must therefore be addressed."*<sup>11</sup>

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation did not allow for a wide survey of viewers and their attitudes and thus the first challenge for the evaluation team was to access the audience of the TV-show. According to the plans there were supposed to be focus groups interviewed before and after airing of the drama, but this had not been implemented.

There is not much research and knowledge about viewers' habits in the West Bank, but in a

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<sup>11</sup> Quoted from Eran Frankel's Guidelines for Application of Palestine curriculum flowchart (March 2005).

recent study<sup>12</sup> of local televisions conducted by Bir Zeit University and commissioned by the Maan Network, 88% of all Palestinians say they watch TV on a daily basis, but few watch local television. 47% reported that they do not watch local news because they can not receive signals for local TV where they live. Those who watch local TV watch it for local news bulletins.

Among the most popular local TV stations, Al-Wattan in Ramallah scores with 14%, followed by Al-Amal in Hebron. These two TV stations also have the strongest signals and 41% of the respondents say they can receive the broadcasts of Al-Wattan.<sup>13</sup> Most respondents (77%) had never heard of the Maan Television Network.<sup>14</sup>

The evaluation team decided to conduct a randomized survey of people in the streets of West Bank in order to access a sample of viewers. The survey interviewed 114 people randomly selected. It should be noted that this is not a scientifically based survey; it is mainly to get an indicator of how many have seen it. Another important note is that the interviews in Tulkarem were done *after* the field survey when the Drama Series had been re-broadcasted.<sup>15</sup>

Out of the 114 interviewed, 52 people (45%) had seen one or more episodes. A large majority of those who replied positively were from Tulkarem. The evaluators heard statements such as:

- The drama had a clear message (some of the interviewed stakeholders said the messages were *too clear* and educational since the title was given in beginning of each episode).
- Too many messages in one episode.
- Impressive level for being the first time experience.
- Good that drama addressed every day issues in Palestinian society.
- Positive that our situation is reflected in drama.

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<sup>12</sup> 800 Palestinians (male and female) were interviewed in survey, selected randomly taking into consideration geographic distribution (governorates, villages, cities and refugee camps), men and women, and all age groups starting at 18 years. Bir Zeit Media Institute, August 2005

<sup>13</sup> Al-Wattan was one of the founders of Maan, but froze its membership in 2004 due to disagreements in the board. Al-Amal is a full member of Maan.

<sup>14</sup> Bir Zeit Media Institute, August 2005

<sup>15</sup> After consultations with SFCG in DC it was decided to include also the Tulkarem respondents even if they were not interviewed during the field survey but after.



- While others saw this as negative. One man said he is tired of his own problems, and want entertainment free of daily problems in order to forget.
- Message was not attracting the attention of the viewers, not provocative enough to keep attention of viewer.
- Construction of the story is weak: is it a drama or a soap opera?
- Youth actors become role models for youth watching the drama.

In Ramallah and Nablus we found one woman who had seen the drama series and a few more had heard about it. When asked why they did not watch, we had the following replies:

- Prefer satellite channels.
- In Ramadan there were many series, they watched the popular and main series
- Some said they do not receive the signals from Al-Quds Educational TV (the only Maan member in Al Bireh-Ramallah after Wattan withdrew).

When assessing if the drama influenced and inspired other TV or production companies to produce similar series, the evaluation did not find any information to support this. It seemed that *Seriously Joking* so far had a limited outcome in terms of influencing other entertainment programs. It should be kept in mind that the evaluation was performed almost immediately after the screening, while in December 2005 the drama was re-broadcasted on the 10 channels of the Maan network and there were plans to have other satellite companies screen it.<sup>16</sup>

Coupled with the lack of knowledge and awareness of the drama series is also the fact that such productions cost a substantial amount of money. A source working in the Palestinian Satellite Channel complained about lack of funds for PSC to produce such series. PSC is funded through public financing from Palestinian Authorities and not by international donors.

Regarding viewers' habits of when they watch TV, women watch mainly during the day and men during the evening. Youth reported that they watch more local television – something that, if correct, should be of interest and noteworthy for SFCG.

A second source of information regarding viewers' opinions of the drama *Seriously Joking* was the phone calls received after the drama was broadcasted. According to Maan, the main contact that local TV stations have with their audience is through the phone calls which they

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<sup>16</sup> Interview with Maan director after presenting the drama series on a Media Exhibition in Dubai.

received. The following types of comments were recorded:

- On technical aspects of the drama: some interviewed people said it is boring because it was technically weak, e.g. one shot, not several angles etc,
- Some stories lack the exciting elements (not enough *habka*) and passion. “We want other subjects to be raised.”
- Some errors in the production, e.g. that people had changed the clothes from one scene to another. Red shirt in one and pink shirt in the next scene.
- Some negative comments on adding donors’ slogan.
- The episodes which raised social topics such as the early marriage, elections, and wasta were good.
- Some episodes topics were poor and vague in terms of intended message, for example the episode on “the use of technology.”



## 5.2 Student Government

### Project description

The overall goal of the Student Government project was two-fold: “to assist in developing and piloting a model governance structure that utilizes the capacities of a mobilized society to both inform and implement school-level projects” and “to promote, through non-violent approaches, youth participation in democratic social change”.

The immediate goals were to:

1. Raise youth awareness and understanding of democratic concepts;
2. Teach youth the skills and requirements for practicing democracy;
3. Develop positive youth attitudes toward democratic change and the use of non-violent means;
4. Teach youth peaceful and non-violent means of gaining and practicing rights;
5. Develop the school environment to suit democratic participation and change.

The project document lists a number of outputs, some intermediary and some final outputs, like:

1. 16 schools with supervising committees established to promote school government and parliament with participation of students in decision making and advocacy at political and administrative levels of PA.
2. Student Committee members trained through awareness campaigns and equipped with manuals for undertaking their roles in the committees.
3. Elections of student government and parliament members held in each participating school and class level.
4. Elected students receive 400 hours training for 16 schools in practicing democracy, human rights, conflict resolution, using non-violence, accountability, and transparency.
5. Formation of united student government with two representatives from each school in West Bank and Gaza using video conference to create a united charter, issue publications and organize meetings.

## Main Findings

The project is found to have succeeded in achieving most, if not all, of its objectives in contributing to the social democratic dialogue, teaching youth the skills for practicing democracy and non-violent dialogue by strengthening principle of free expression among youth.

The project outputs and outcomes were assessed in relation to its objectives. From the interviews and observation of students' performance in public discussions, it is clear that the student government model have worked positively on developing the attitudes, skills and behavior of the targeted students' concepts of democracy, participation, dialogue and communication. It should be noted that the evaluation team only visited three out of 16 schools, but the findings are also based on other project documents and one mid-term evaluation.<sup>17</sup>

The evaluation team was greatly impressed by the student government members in three schools by attending three public activities of the projects with decision makers. In addition to acquiring knowledge of democracy principles and civic rights other skills were visible:



- Self-esteem and confidence.
- Ability and the courage to express their opinions.
- Problem-solving skills & skills in mediation and conflict resolution techniques.
- Ability to discuss and have a dialogue.
- Ability to plan and budget for activities.

Additionally, from observing the students implementing their activities, review their writings in the newsletters, the Evaluation Team noticed the following skills:

- Well developed communication skills: verified through observations at Decision-making meetings and in class-rooms.
- Clear minds, articulate language and advanced abstract thinking.
- Good planning and management skills, verified through files of SG in schools.
- Ability to dissent from authorities: observed in schools, courage, and self

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<sup>17</sup> According to findings in the "Report of Midterm Evaluation" (June 2005) there was an sharp increase (from 49% to 70%) in students' knowledge of concepts such as democracy, civil rights, role of government and electoral rights.

confidence to talk against teachers, meetings with decision-makers.

- Ability to listen to others with diverging views: verified through observation in meeting in PLC.
- Leadership skills: observed from their relationship and mediation skills.



Student Government Meeting with Decision-Makers in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) regarding the education sector.

Several consultations with parents and teachers served to support the finding that the project had contributed to the development of these skills (as opposed to if the students would have developed the skills independently of the project). Other factors crucial for developing such skills;

Support and understanding from the *family environment*; the parents who were interviewed, came more of less from educated class. They were enthusiastic, in favor of the activities, supportive and understanding. They provided

support to their children during the election campaign or afterwards by helping preparing material or searching for information. It was remarked that parents with certain educational background were more understanding and open to allow their children to participate in the project activities than parents with less education. Such as to stay late after school or travel outside their residential areas to follow the project activities. But even with educated parents, it was more difficult for female youth to participate in activities outside the schools hours than their male colleagues.

- Motivation and support of *school administration*, especially the head master/mistress. The supporting role of the school supervision committee and the positive attitude of the teachers enabled the students to express their needs and attitudes without fear, while the logistic and physical support assisted the students in implementing their activities
- The personal character, intellectual capacity and readiness of the *students themselves*; students who were enrolled in the project, are those who are already remarkable youth for either leadership qualities or potential, talented students or good school performance. The fact that these students have already some qualification probably contributed to engagement in the project.
- The civic education curriculum, which is part of the children's compulsory reading, contributed on the one hand, to a better understanding of some terms and concepts in democracy and governance. On the other hand it fostered students to acquire

- knowledge in the schools by practicing these concepts.<sup>18</sup>
- The supervision committee contributed greatly in involving the school administration and teachers in the project; motivate them and change their attitudes towards student-teacher relationship. The four interviewed supervising committees all expressed interest and commitment towards the project.

For example, in Al-Zaytoun Boys' School, the headmaster (*see photo*) helped the student



government to establish a website for the SG, got personally engaged and volunteered after school time to develop the project in his school. The headmaster decided to integrate the project as a regular school activity and expressed readiness to volunteer in spreading the idea to other schools.

Other teachers said they were opposing the project in the beginning, but after getting involved in the supervision committee, they started to better understand the project objectives, e.g. the Headmistress in Nablus was skeptical in the beginning. She was afraid that the project could undermine the authority of the teachers and encourage disobedience. After seeing the project at work, she changed her mind and became in favor of it.

Teachers involved in the project said the project is successful by opening a new horizon for the youth in ways of experiencing democracy and exercising leadership. In addition the project assisted in:

- Reinforcing the understanding of the new curriculum. In civic and national education is part of the project, legislature, executive, and judiciary powers. Concepts like Constitution were now learnt in theory and practiced in parallel; and,
  - Helping to build the relationship between students and teachers and school administration, more democracy, new channels for communication, new arenas for expressing their frustrations.
- Relationship between student and teachers changed. Teachers became more tolerant and open to accept that students who had the courage to speak out. Nevertheless,

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<sup>18</sup> In the new curriculum developed by the Palestinian National Authority since 1998 and implemented since year 2000, Civic Education and National Education are taught from first grade.

some the older generations of teachers who still believe in the traditional teacher – student relationship, were more resistant to the project. This was a comment the evaluation team heard several times from students on early retirement of teachers. Students said that they suffered hardships from teachers who did not accept the system. PCDCR staff usually work with the school administration to interfere with the teachers and resolve the emerging inconveniences between students and some teachers.



*Ballot box used for the student elections*

Of the two manuals planned to be prepared, the first one was produced and the second one was, up to the date of writing this report, still in the process of preparations. The conceptual manual developed for the project was very detailed and rich in information on issues of democracy, elections, governance civil rights, and

human rights. It provides guidance to both students and teachers, but some comments were made:

- The manual language is very technical with some difficult terms.
- The design could be more proper to teachers and headmasters, but not attractive enough to youth and students of this age a group.
- The manual addresses both, the teachers and the students, putting them at the same intellectual and one pedagogic level.
- The exercises in the manual are educational; they lack excitement and attraction to this age group to read it and do some self learning.

In Gaza city PCDCR is well known and respected among the sectors working with youth, non-governmental and governmental, and decision-makers. One observation that supports this finding is in the Unified Government Conference MoE, UNRWA and schools were present. Others observations from the evaluation are:

- From reviewing documents and project material, the center seems known in the community. However the media coverage of PCDCR activities was quite limited. Not much was said about the project in the local radio or TV. The newspapers published the student government activities under the local news page.

- The PCDCR have distributed 2000 copies of the manual to schools and students, two newsletters were produced and 10000 copies were distributed. This means that the PCDCR publications have reached a wide audience.
- PCDCR have other big projects in Gaza and Nablus such as the peer-mediation project, the counseling project, the university students' project and other projects that reach wide range of citizens and organizations. The PCDCR is not only known at the level of organizations and decision making, but the nature of their work, direct contact with normal citizens and their issues, makes them a grassroots organization.
- Among NGO-community and civil society networks, the centre is not very well known. PCDCR is not member of local NGOs networks or professional networks.<sup>19</sup>
- PCDCR, apart of Nablus, is not well known in West Bank.

### **Mapping of change**

The government member students exhibited more advanced personal and communication skills than those who were not exposed to the experience. During the interviews the difference was observed in ability to express themselves, in confidence and communication skills between the two groups. It was clear that students who were exposed to the experience were more articulate, more open minded and out spoken in expressing their views. This was verified at two schools, in a Nablus Girls school (see below) and in an English class in Al-Zaytoun School.

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<sup>19</sup> Most Palestinian NGOs are either member of the progressive network PNGO or the Palestinian Union of Charitable Organisations. PCDCR has chosen to stand outside in order to maintain strict independence with regards to both choice of programs and donors.



### Girls speaking out in Nablus



In one of the student government-decision makers meeting with the police officer in the Nablus female school, the meeting was attended by 70 female students, half of them were the student government members and the other half were normal student, The difference in character, the behaviour, interest and engagement in the discussion was clear among the two groups, the government members were far

more self-confident, more persuasive in their arguments and ready to ask challenging questions like “why don’t the police implement the law” and “where do the arms come from?” The students, who were not exposed to the project activities, were less engaged and spoke less.

A difference in level of personality development was tracked among the different school government members. For example a difference in attitude, behavior, and communication skills varied between the female students in al-Nusseirat female school and Thafer Al-Masri/Nablus female school.

In Nusseirat refugee camp the girls in the SG were less open, less confident, more timid, and less expressive. Only 3 or 4 girls out of 35 girls dared to speak – even without teachers present. Their communication skills and behavior clearly were not as well as developed as Nablus female students.

Both schools had received the same training, but the social surrounding environment varies in the two contexts. After some discussion with the project team in the PCDCR, the difference could be explained in relation to the social life being more restricted in the context of a refugee camps. Nablus is considered a big open city in West Bank where people are more exposed to public life. Nusseirat is a refugee camp, south of Gaza city in the middle area. During the last five years of the Intifada, Nusseirat was partly disconnected from the rest of Gaza Strip due to the surrounding Jewish settlements. During these years the living and social conditions have deteriorated. Poverty, isolation, and over crowdedness contributed to maintaining a conservative lifestyle where females in particular would be deprived from freedom of expression and movement.

From the above observations it may be claimed that external factors has stronger impact than the project related to changes in attitudes, among school teachers and principals. The student



*Member of the Student Government for Girls in Nusseirat Girls' School in the Gaza Strip*

government girls in Nusseirat were more timid than their peers in Nablus. However, the girls in Nusseirat who had gone through the Student government experience were less timid than the Nusseirat girls who had not gone through the project. Still, it could seem that the project would at least need 2-3 years to institutionalize changes in attitudes among school teachers and principals.

The experience in the electoral and government role and responsibilities extended to political and social issues. From the observation and comparison, the evaluation team has noticed that students at this early age (13-16 years) become more aware and more engaged in the general political public debates, this is a normal stage in the adolescent personality development. In the Palestinian context, the political engagement starts at relatively early age. However sometimes this engagement become the main focus of the youth and dominates their minds which can deprive them from developing other aspects of the character such as social, mental, intellectual, emotionally as well as developing their talents.

The role of the student government or parliament is to involve all students in decision making regarding the school life and issues. One purpose is to give every student the space to express their needs, speak up their opinion and given the opportunity to be heard and their views considered. Others are to solve emerging conflicts among the students and the school administration and allow sharing and exchanging ideas with other students.

Applying this role to the Student Government Project, the Student Government seemed to have limited relations with the rest of the school students. 16 initiatives that came from the students were implemented. The rest of the Student Government activities, although raising important issues, were not reflecting the student's constituency interest. In our review of the activities of the students' parliament activities the following observations were made:

- Raising awareness and public meetings topics in the 16 school were more or less



- similar if not identical. Most of these topics were (in sequence); a) tolerance and non violence communication, b) theories and practices of democracy, c) civic and human rights, d) media role, e) students related issues f) political topics, g) health topics and h) social topics.
- This unified agenda of the awareness session gives the impression that the selection of the awareness topics possibly was inspired by the school administration or PCDCR project staff, and to less extent, the students themselves. It could give the impression that the Student Government is not reflecting the students' interests and needs as it was meant to. The Student Government members were elected by the school student to advocate on behalf of the student community inside the school and to express student's needs and interests on their behalf, reflect the expectation and develop the interaction between the students and the school administration.

Several of the student informants expressed an interest in seeing a further development of the government model to focus on their own personal needs. The adolescence teenagers mentioned that, in addition to intellectual needs, they have physical, emotional, and social interests that need to be satisfied in order to develop their character, personality, and self-confidence. The evaluation team observed on a few occasions that there was an obvious "gap" between the complicated topics raised by the youth in the project and their personal level. For example 13-14 year old kids talking about "*infilat al-amni*" (= the chaos of security forces), an issue that until recently was not a public issue at all, and especially not among youth. One professional psychologist consulted confirmed that this could be an issue that needed follow-up by the project implementing organization.



*Supervising Committee in Nusseirat along with Project Coordinator from PCDCR .*

While the Student government members received a lot of support and training from the project team and the supervising committee, the rest of school students were less supported to learn and develop their citizenship model role. Their role was more of less confined to the electoral experience. In the project formulation less attention were given to encourage mutual interaction between the elected government body and its constituency. In other words, a lot of effort was spent on building the elected student's skills and capacities, less attention was given to the remaining students' constituency to

help them learn and practice the citizenship role and practice democracy.

Comparing the school government model of the PCDCR and similar students' initiatives in other countries, such as US and UK, most of the elected students' bodies in these countries gave a lot of attention to their role with their own constituency. Their main role was to reflect and represent the student's interest, needs, and concerns. Mechanisms of interaction between the students and the elected government bodies were more organized and systemic. In the PCDCR model, this aspect of the democracy building did not get enough attention. The influence of the project, therefore, stays confined to the 35 students from each school.



Poster from PCDCR in downtown Gaza City: "The Chaos of Weapons" (Al-Fawda AS-Silah) as part of a campaign to increase awareness of the need to control the use of weapons and disarm non-state groups.

Attitude change is a long-term process. Still the PCDCR claims that once the attitude of the youth have changed, it is unlikely that it would disappear easily or with the termination of the project activities. However attitude change itself can be disturbed and subjected to external influences. Previous experience of non violent activities has proven that non violence education did not always lead to peaceful actions (see also 6.1 Relevance for

a discussion on this).

The current political situation is still the main generator of violence. Education alone, without any tangible change in the reality of injustice, stays weak in changing behavior of the Palestinians while Israeli occupation and restrictions on movement continue. In the case of this project, a lot of changes have taken place in youth's attitudes. The newly gained skills in leadership will surely help these youth exploring their role in the society at later stages in their lives. However, it is still early to determine the long term effects of the project on the target group. Maybe these changes can best be tracked three or four years later, where an impact evaluation can give a better picture on the change of directions among these students.

Some *critical factors* can be identified for the success or failure of the project in a long term perspective:<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> All the critical factors were presented and discussed with the PCDCR in a debrief session during the final day of the field survey in Gaza. The management of PCDCR have given input to these points and are fully aware of them.

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- Some families expressed their concerns about the extensive number of activities in the projects which could also affect their academic performance. Some families and teachers complained that some youth became so involved in the project that they occasionally missed classes.
  - From analyses of the project design and activities, it is clear that the families of these students are not sufficiently involved. Some think families need to be prepared to tolerate and accept the new empowered character of the youth.
  - Donor dependency. In order to reduce the donor dependency of this type of projects, some teachers and headmasters suggested that the activities should become an integral part of the Ministry of Education's extra-curricular activities. They believe that the core activities of the project can be implemented without funds.
  - The project activities were very intensive, many of them implemented during the school day, which led students to leave their classes or reduce the duration of their classes. This caused some interruptions and inconveniences for teachers, students, and families.
  - The Ministry of Education and UNRWA procedures delayed the implementation of activities, especially in Nablus region mainly due to bureaucratic procedures.
  - Resistance of teachers. Some teachers in some schools opposed the project idea and refused to participate. In one school in Gaza, this made the project less successful.

## 6. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS

### 6.1 Relevance

The Student government project is seen as highly relevant for the context it is working within, bearing in mind the critical factors outlined in 5.2.

For Maan and any potential outcome of the TV drama, there is a need for exploring further who watches the local televisions. Taking into consideration that SFCG has invested 53% of the resources in the NVCR program into intended outcome media production, one could have expected some more attention being paid to the actual impact of these productions, for example in conducting baseline surveys or studies of KAB (knowledge-attitudes-behavior) before and after the media interventions.

Keeping in mind that youth watch more local television than others groups (according to the Bir Zeit study, see page 38) such baseline surveys could retain a special focus on youth's knowledge and attitudes. There is also a valid point for discussing the need for linking up with Arab satellites so they can broadcast the Palestinian drama series in order to obtain a larger regional effect.

As for the relevance of NVCR program as a whole there are some gaps between the goals and the implemented activities. For example the goal "to promote moderation, dialogue, tolerance etc." might be relevant if one addresses the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, but since this program is targeting mainly Palestinians, this goal could be adjusted to better describe the current work being done inside the Palestinian society.

The underlying analysis and assumption is that Palestinian society lacks moderation currently dominated by intolerant, violent approaches for resolving problems and those CSOs promote incitement. The situation/context analysis does not refer to available studies or research on Palestinian society. Also there is no logical build up from the context analysis to the development of goals and objectives.

On the immediate level the two projects serve as important contributions to achieving the overall objective "to promote moderation, dialogue, tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution and reduce incitement by working with Palestinian Civil Society organizations".

With the prevailing violent atmosphere and harsh living conditions surrounding the Palestinian people there is always a risk that these changes in attitudes and behaviours can quickly change due to unexpected violent events. The situation in the Middle East is known for being explosive. Often a minor spark can ignite violent reactions. Unless the overall situation changes, there can be no *guarantees* for long-lasting effects of these projects

The documentary *Arna's Children* (2002) by Israeli Juliano Meir-Khamis illustrates this point well: In the Jenin refugee camp in the 90s, the movie shows three young boys who are painting, drawing and acting; the young boys express themselves and their dreams for the future in a peaceful and non-violent manner. A few years later, the documentary takes the viewer back to the boys in the camps and finds that two of the boys are dead; one in a suicide attack and one in the fighting that took place between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian militiamen in 2002, while the third is leading a resistance group living as a fugitive on the run from the Israeli army.<sup>21</sup>

On the immediate level, when the children of Arna were active in the theatre group and the drawing workshops, they did well and gained valuable knowledge in non-violent expressions. But when the Intifada broke out the external conditions affected them stronger than the non-violent behaviour attained. The knowledge and attitudes obtained could not be sustained in the violent atmosphere around them.

Based on the above the following observations can be made:

- Weakness of design of goals is related to insufficient analysis behind NVCR-programme and reflects weak knowledge-based analysis of Palestinian CSOs and civil society in general.
- Lacks reference to available baseline surveys and/or research of Palestinian CSOs and society

## 6.2 Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the projects has been assessed based on two main criteria:

- The output in terms of contribution to the project objectives; to what extent have they achieved the intended outcomes.

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<sup>21</sup> Website: <http://www.arna.info/Arna/>

- The project contribution to promoting non-violence, tolerance, and moderation in Palestinian society.

The *Student Government* has succeeded to realize all the planned objectives. To what extent the students' attitudes have been changed depend on the external environment they are living related to the three dimensions described in the findings: family, school and society and the overall external political environment. To measure the full impact of this project a new study should be done after 3-5 years. This report is limited to giving an indication of the overall outcome based on the sum of the achieved results.

The SG produced additional results, such as when students intervened and approached decision-makers for changing unsatisfactory conditions in their own schools (crowdedness, security). These events demonstrate that the students have not only received training and increased their knowledge, but they managed to act decisively based on their knowledge.

The *drama series* were produced according to the plan and all outputs were achieved, but the project objectives were not fulfilled due to their inadequate design. The second objective is to "reduce violent incidents in Palestinian society by application of non-violent techniques of conflict resolution through changing knowledge, attitudes, and behavior."<sup>22</sup>

The drama series reached only small segment of Palestinian society due to the local television broadcasts and as such likely have limited impact on the occurrence of violence. A media intervention like the drama series will have limited influence due to the nature and complexity of what causes violence in Palestinian society.

The project could possible *contribute* to changing some attitudes if it was linked to other projects such as the Student Government and similar interventions by other institutions. The two projects subject for this evaluation was however implemented with separate management arrangements and on three completely different locations (Nablus, Bethlehem, and Gaza) with limited synergy between them.

### 6.3 Efficiency

Overall, both projects seemed to have fully complied with the project agreements with the

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<sup>22</sup> Quoted from project document NVCR Subgrant No. 2926-05-FOG-017

donors, even if the deadlines for the milestones were too tight. For the drama series, the milestones system was irrelevant to this type of activity and seemed almost impossible to fulfill.

This evaluation was not requested to do any financial analysis and has accordingly not assessed the projects' cost-efficiency. However, it was observed and verified that for Maan network there were several indicators of improvements<sup>23</sup> in cost-efficient management during the implementation of the project:

- Management was flexible and responsive to the needs of the production crew despite obstacles such as lack of funds (since donor was reimbursing and not paying in advance).
- A decentralized management approach was adopted during the production process saving overall management costs.
- Reporting improved from beginning to end of project.

However, despite the achievements there seem to be a room for improving the administration and management at Maan by:

- The project was implemented by ad-hoc type management procedures. A sudden change in the reference and contact person in Maan for the production crew in the middle of the process led to unclear roles and responsibilities.
- The project was not subjected to a risk assessment in the planning phase: some of the constraints could have been foreseen if risks had been assessed during before starting the production.
- Design of the Milestones system was not in accordance with the production plan, something which lead to too short deadlines for reporting to the donor and delay in reporting (and thus reimbursement of funds). This further causes a high level of stress and pressure on the crew.
- Role of SFCG media consultant was unclear and not identified by SFCG. It was not understood by Maan and the consultant himself.
- Board of directors was not sufficiently involved in Maan work and vision.

In terms of the Student Government, the PCDCR have adopted an efficient system on

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<sup>23</sup> Most of the below information is gathered from the Financial and Administrative Manager of AED (who is also doing financial follow-up of SFCG projects) and verified by field survey in Maan.



different levels. At school levels, the Student Government, in cooperation with PCDCR project staff and the headmaster, have accurately managed the small budget allocated for each school. They have prepared financial statements supported with invoices and report of activities. The schools have stayed within budget limits, some schools have even made some savings by collecting funds in their local communities and used the extra money to help poor students or do some extra activities.

PCDCR has shown high level of efficiency in managing the grants. The PCDCR have managed to overcome the significant delays from the donors and meet the USAID financial procedures of reimbursement. PCDCR was expected to implement the activities without cash flow from the donor. Only after the submitting the activity report and met the milestones, the USAID would transfer the amount. The system of reimbursement without any advance working capital, places the implementing organization under a lot of financial pressure. Despite the above, PCDCR successfully dealt with the requirements of the project, met the milestones in time and in accordance with the signed agreements.

The project team, the management, and the financial department work use a channel of communication which provides reasonable estimation and control of expenditures. For example, (1) the project team have to develop action plan for each mile stone, (2) submit it to the project manger, who would approve it and based on the action plan, make an estimation of cost for each activity (3) submit the budget to the financial department which will verify the budget items, make their financial comments or recommendations before the plan is finally approved. (4) Submit the plan and the financial request to the SFCG, verified by the officer in charge and send the approval this close cooperation guarantee high level of efficiency and avoid over use or miss of the allocated funds.

PCDCR is satisfied with the cooperation mechanism and partnership pattern with SFCG. The level of control practiced by SFCG staff was within the agreements and contributed to the assurance of funds being spent according to budget and project agreement.

### **6.3 Sustainability**

For the TV-drama the main effect that might last for some time, was mainly developing the capacity of the creative team trained with the drama series. This is seen as a valuable asset for any potential new drama series. SFCG is already reaping the benefits of this project since it has contracted with another donor to continue producing 20 new episodes of the drama



series.

For the student government the PCDCR have no plans to continue with the project activities after the funds have ended. However, two of the interviewed school administrations in Gaza expressed their willingness to continue. In Nablus they are not planning to continue without financial support, while in Gaza Al-Zaytoun and Nusseirat School they are planning to integrate the School Government in their annual plan and expressed readiness to continue without financial support. They believe that the project basic activities are achievable without any costs. The other activities that require financial support can be reduced, based on donations or students contribution to organize it.

The evaluation also found evidence that the SG has become a model for other schools and has been replicated.<sup>24</sup> Finally, many SGs in Gaza had collected funds for planning their own activities, something which is an indicator for financial sustainability.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Consultation with UNRWA revealed that several schools outside the project have adopted models similar to that of the SG.

<sup>25</sup> In Nablus the SGs were not allowed to collect funds and donations for the project, while in Gaza the MoE had no problem with it as long as it was made clear that these were extra-curriculum activities.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 Drama series

1. Despite lack of proper pre-planning and financial shortcoming in budgets, Maan managed to produce and finalize the drama series in time.

*Recommendation:* Ensure that key stakeholders (director, producer, location director, chief camera, sound actors) and professional drama production consultants are involved in the detailed planning process, including budgeting.

2. Selection of appropriate broadcasting timing and good marketing plan seem to be crucial elements in reaching out to large number of viewers and consequently the success of the drama series. The drama series was broadcasted during Ramadan period, which seemed to affect the percentage of viewers. In addition the short marketing period seemed to be not enough in advertising the series.

*Recommendation:* Develop a marketing plan (with budget) for the new drama series including innovative ways of attracting viewers, follow-up activities (competitions, phone-in answers etc) and monitoring mechanisms and continue to promote “Seriously Joking” for broadcast on Arab satellites.

3. The production crew had limited or no previous experience in drama series. They were given a short period to prepare and develop a shared communication language and learn to work together as a team. These issues created some obstacles and prolonged the production process.

*Recommendation:* Spend time on the teambuilding of the production crew in order for them to get to know each other, develop joint terms, build team spirit, develop a common language, and ensure a proper distribution of roles and responsibilities. If budget allows, professional training in another country with good experience can help the team to improve their skills in this particular field.

4. The story level of complexity and excitement was highly criticized by all informants for being dull, but all informants had different ideas on how it could be improved. In

general, some episodes were seen more like educational messages rather than drama stories, and seemed to not being able to capture the imagination and attention of viewers.

*Recommendation:* Develop a stronger drama stories which challenges the imagination of the viewers and provoke their thinking as well as provoke them to act on the solutions. The drama writers in Palestine are few, and it may be worth to organize further training in drama writing.

5. Too many script-writers weakened the consistency of the story and characters. It also meant extra work in the production process as amendments were made continuously.

*Recommendation:* Have one, or maximum two, scriptwriter(s), or one writer and an assistant.

6. Role of Advisory Board was not well identified during the production of the series. According to some of the interviewed board members their mandate with regards to the production process was not clear. The board met a few times and discussed, but gave no tangible contributions to the episodes. Members of the production crew confirmed the lack of clarity of the board's role.

*Recommendation:* Re-consider the need for an Advisory board and/or consider having an advisory board on technical production and focus groups on the content communication. The composition of focus groups should reflect the target group.

7. The drama series fostered and trained a new generation of drama production team and actors.

*Recommendation:* Preserve and further develop the best actors and production team from the drama series for the next drama; at the same time continue to use auditions and open competition among amateur and professional actors.

8. Management at Maan developed greatly during the process of the drama production towards being more sensitive and responsive to the needs of the production crew.

*Recommendation:* Maan is encouraged to continue the valuable process of

decentralization and empowering the creative team in production, including giving a larger role for the Board of Directors.

## 7.2 Student Government

1. The Student Government has, during its 13.5 months of implementation, created an important arena for free expression, participation, and democracy for youth and students. The project succeeded to address wide spectrum of students which expressed a desire to continue the project and/or expand it into a long-term program.

*Recommendation:* For wider effect in the society, it is worthwhile to explore chances for expanding the project to include:

- ✓ More lobbying and advocacy work from the side of PCDCR with the Ministry of Education and UNRWA to integrate the project model as extra-curricular activities in the schools.
  - ✓ Expand to other areas, especially rural areas and refugee camps in the south and North of Gaza and rural areas of Nablus region.
  - ✓ Utilize the resources that have been mobilized for expansion like the principal and teachers who volunteer to train other supervising committees and to set up the project in other schools.
  - ✓ Organize regular meetings for the involved schools' supervision committees to exchange information and experience. Reflect on the project's weaknesses and strengths and make recommendations to develop the project idea.
2. Changing attitudes and behaviors of patriarchy, lack of tolerance for youth's participation is a long-term process. Changing attitudes involves the whole society and environment surrounding the youth. This change includes, besides the teachers, the family as well.

*Recommendation:* Prolong the period of the project to at least three years. The project needs to develop mechanisms that address parents and family of the youth in order to assist them in accepting and supporting the youth. Parents' council could be one option, and/or reaching parents through media.

3. The project was not visible enough in the local media in Gaza, while in Nablus the SG was more visible and had better cooperation with media. The existence of local television in Nablus helped, while in Gaza local TV-stations did not exist at the time of the project implementation.

*Recommendation:* The project is encouraged to use media more actively, especially in Gaza, which has a weaker distribution of other media (like newspapers, local TV-stations, radios).

4. The project played a positive role in changing the traditional student-teacher relationship in the targeted schools. Involvement in the project activities have contributed to better school performance among students, especially in the civic education classes.

*Recommendation:* The project could capitalize more on the opportunities for improving school environments (especially for schools experiencing violence and disturbance) in order to “sell” the project to more schools.

5. Project focused mostly on public issues and political concerns like lawlessness, chaos of security forces (*infilat al-amni*), and education. There was less focus on students and adolescence youths’ particular emotional, social, and physical needs as pointed out by several of the student informants. A professional psychologist pointed out a potential danger if there is a large “gap” between the complicated topics raised by project and the level of the students’ personal character.

*Recommendation:* Project activities could benefit from balancing between political/social issues and other needs in this age, such as; intellectual, mental, and sexuality needs which could contribute in developing the self-confidence of the adolescent (this point is especially valid for young girls).

6. PCDCR had limited cooperation and networking with other local organizations working within the fields of youth and children’s development. Although PCDCR has a strong cooperation with local educational authorities, this cooperation and networking did not extend to other NGOs that work in the same field and have developed similar activities in the schools.

*Recommendation:* The effectiveness and outcome of the project would most likely increase if PCDCR extended its networking and cooperation with other local initiatives for youth's participation and influence.

### 7.3 NVCR Program and SFCG

1. The goals and objectives of NVCR were good, but not fully developed and properly placed in an analytical situational context.

*Recommendation:* SFCG could consider revisiting the goals and objectives of the NVCR program to make a stronger focus on the goals that are achievable within the existing political/social situation in Palestinian society.

2. More than half of the funds of the NVCR program have been channeled to intended outcome drama series in radio and television (mainly through MEND and Maan network) without systems of audience ratings, research on potential audience/viewers, or baseline surveys of viewers' changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.

*Recommendation:* SFCG should encourage cooperation between the local partners who work within media production in order to strengthen the measuring of percentage changes in audience attitudes and comprehension of message. SFCG could also explore option of contracting independent media research institutes to do baseline surveys before and after the media intervention.

3. SFCG in Jerusalem is a small office with a significant work load. It lacks institutionalization of routines for project follow-up (except financial) and partnership approaches. With well-established organizations like PCDCR, the lack of routines is not a problem, but with less established institutes like Maan, it is a challenge.

*Recommendation:* strengthen the capacity and competence in SFCGJ for following up with local partners

4. The role, responsibilities, and mandate of the SFCG media consultant for the drama series were not clear to the local television station or SFCGJ.

*Recommendation:* SFCGJ should clarify the role of the media consultant through an active dialogue and communication with the local partner.

5. SFCG in Jerusalem is not visible enough among the local partners. The donors in the two projects evaluated (AED and USAID) are better known.

*Recommendation:* SFCG and its partners should take the opportunity to disseminate more information about SFCG's missions in other parts of the world in order to promote exchanges of lessons learned.

6. The conflict creates polarization in all aspects of operations in Israel and Palestine, also for international organizations working with both Israelis and Palestinians. So far it seems that SFCG has handled that in a balanced way, but with a frequent turnover of staff in the Jerusalem office, it could easily change. If SFCG continues to work on changing attitudes inside Palestinian society, the organization is dependent on enjoying trust and confidence among a wide range of local Palestinian organizations and civil society. This implies a need to focus more on the composition of staff when recruiting new staff in the office, like recruiting more people close to and among the target group of the projects.

*Recommendation:* SFCG could consider expanding beyond the seven organizations it has supported in the NVCR program and employing more Palestinians in order to reach out to other networks and links in the Palestinian civil society including media and politics/academia.

## **ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

### **Program Evaluation: Search for Common Ground in the Middle East**

#### **Duration:**

The duration of the contract will be a total period of 30 days. Envisaged days are as follows: 3 days preparation, 14 days in country, 10 days draft revision and final report preparation. Preparation should take place between October 1 and November 1, and arrival in country should be on November 7.

**Deadline for applications is 23 September 2005.**

#### **Context:**

Search for Common Ground in the Middle East seeks proposals from one or two qualified individuals to conduct an evaluation of projects conducted by two grant recipients in November 2005 in the West Bank & Gaza.

#### **Deliverables:**

1. Deliverable 1: Approach and methodological paper – Outline detailed methodology, provide any comments on the TOR
2. Deliverable 2: Draft Final Report – including a 2 page executive summary in English and Arabic
3. Deliverable 3: Final Report – as above but satisfactorily addressing comments.

*See section 3.2 below for more details on required deliverables*

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Search for Common Ground**

Since 1982, Search for Common Ground, an international non-governmental organization, has been working to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial confrontation, toward cooperative solutions. Our philosophy is to “understand the differences,” but “act on the commonalities.” SFCG is engaged in a long-term process of incremental transformation, so we make long-term commitments. We seek cross-cultural integration of indigenous and international concepts of conflict prevention. We work with partners on the ground to strengthen local capacity to deal with



conflict. SFCG currently works in or with fifteen countries: Angola, Belgium, Burundi, D.R. Congo, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Liberia, Macedonia, Middle East (with offices in Jerusalem and Amman), Morocco, Sierra Leone, Turkey, Ukraine, and the USA. Our “toolbox” includes mediation/facilitation training, community organizing, radio/TV, journalism, sports, drama, and music.

## 1.2 Program Summary

“Support for Local Initiatives for Non-Violent Conflict Resolution” (NVCR) (also known as the “Moderate Voices” project) is funded by USAID through the Academy for Educational Development (AED). Established in September 2002, the goals of the NVCR Project are as follows: 1) to promote moderation, dialogue, tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution and reduce incitement by working with Palestinian Civil Society organizations (CSOs) that have the interest, know-how and desire to carry out non-violent peace-oriented strategies; and 2) to strengthen CSOs so they can act as advocates for citizen interests according to democratic and participatory principles.

The objectives of the NVCR project include:

- Strengthen administrative and financial skills and capacities of Palestinian CSOs to implement non-violent conflict resolution oriented projects;
- Create relevant and strategic partnerships between CSOs to more effectively implement NVCR projects;
- Increase technical skill level of Palestinian CSOs to create conflict resolution messages, encourage socially responsible journalism, empower civil society and teach conflict resolution and non-violence skills;
- Increase citizen, particularly youth, participation in NVCR projects in order to foster the use of democratic principles and conflict resolution skills.

The project has financed 19 projects ranging from \$5,896 to \$183,834 with 11 of them \$50,000 or less. Project activities have taken place primarily in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Gaza with some training ranging more widely in the West Bank. Youth, variously defined, have been the focus of many activities. The project has been supported by a Chief of Party, either a Deputy Chief of Party or a Program Officer, and a Financial Administrator employed by AED and working in the SFCG Jerusalem office. Activities have ranged in time from a weekend to a year and a half. There has been an emphasis on the use of media, particularly radio and television, as educational instruments.

Search for Common Ground in the Middle East is a branch of Search for Common Ground, an international non-governmental organization with headquarters in Washington, DC and Brussels.

### 1.3 Selected Grantees

#### *Choice of Grantees to be analyzed:*

SFCG Middle East recommends that two grant recipients be analyzed: The Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR) and the Ma'an Television network. Together, these recipients manage three of the largest projects and have received \$461,818—48 percent of the total awarded. Search for Common Ground in the Middle East uses two major “tools” to address regional conflicts: civil society development and, media, and a more minor tool: people-to-people activities. PCDCR and Ma'an use the two major tools and are therefore representative to some degree of the kinds of efforts undertaken in this program. In evaluating them, we hope to draw lessons that will be applicable to future decisions about using these programmatic tools in the Middle East. However, it must be clear from the beginning that SFCG Middle East recognises that conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessment of these two projects will not be aggregated to the program level. What can/should be drawn are lessons learned, identified benchmarks/or analysis of critical factors for success.

#### *1.3.1 Ma'an Network:*

Over the years, SFCG Middle East has developed a solid partnership with the Ma'an Network of independent Palestinian TV stations, covering the West Bank and Gaza. In 2003, production included a series of 26 roundtable political programs on non-violent alternatives to spiraling violence. In 2004, we produced and broadcast a 15-part series on Reframing Incitement. Early in 2005, we started the research and production of an intended outcome TV drama that will address, through half hour entertaining episodes, issues related to Palestinian daily life and provide creative tools for resolving some of these challenges. The first 13 episodes will be completed by the end of 2005 and we have received funding for 20 additional episodes. We are also working to strengthen the member stations of the Ma'an network through training and equipment upgrades and to support them in producing a bi-weekly TV magazine series to be broadcast in the West Bank and Gaza. Search for Common Ground is also working with al-Quds Educational TV and the Ma'an Network on a project to provide live television coverage, by satellite, of the debates of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

#### *1.3.2 PCDCR:*

SFCG Middle East assists several Palestinian NGOs in strengthening their capacity to encourage non-violence and to promote moderation, dialogue, tolerance, non-violent methods of conflict resolution and to reduce incitement. Through the Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR), our partner in Gaza and Nablus, we trained students as peer group mediators and helped establish youth parliaments. Currently PCDCR is introducing elected student governments in 16 schools, 12 in Gaza and 4 in Nablus.

## 2. THE EVALUATION

### 2.1 Organizational Goal:

SFCG, as an organization, has committed to conducting programmatic evaluations on a two-year basis in order to maximize the effectiveness of our programming and engage in continuous improvement and learning within programs and across the organization. Where necessary SFCG utilises project evaluations as building blocks of programmatic evaluation.

### 2.2 Evaluation Questions:

The evaluation should adhere to the guidelines for external evaluators produced by SFCG and attached to this Terms of Reference. Six key evaluation questions, as well as specific questions for the 2 projects, are detailed below. These questions are relevant, and should be answered, at both the project (selected grant) and program (NVCR) levels:

- 1) How **relevant** was the design and selection of the projects to the needs/opportunities at the program and project (2 grantees) levels?
- 2) To what extent have the selected grants had **results** on their target audiences, taking into account the political context in which the activities have been implemented? Evaluators should be alert to negative as well as positive and unintended as well as intended results.

#### Ma'an:

- *How has participating in these activities affected the capacity of the NGO to do its work? (In project implementation; grantwriting/fundraising; transparency; public presentation).*
- *To what degree did the resulting media products influence the attitudes, knowledge and behavior of the audience?*

#### PCDCR:

- *What are the attitudes of the students who participated in the projects regarding how to resolve differences, the ability to dissent from authorities, and other issues?*
  - *To what extent do their views differ from those of their peers who did not participate in the training?*
  - *How do teachers, principals, parents, and authority figures who were exposed to the student activities view them? To what extent were their own attitudes affected?*
  - *How well known is the organization its community?*
- 3) How **long-lasting** are the results likely to be?
    - *To what extent will the specific programs funded by this grant continue once this funding*

*ends?*

- *Is there any evidence that participants and beneficiaries will continue to exhibit new modes of thinking and to adapt their knowledge of, and participation in, peacebuilding to other contexts?*
- 4) How **efficiently** have grantees' activities been managed and implemented?
- 5) How **effective** were the grantees' activities in meeting the program objectives? I.e. could other types of programming/grant structure have had better results? How?
  - *Discuss the implications of these assessments for future program design and implementation – including the selection of grantees and the relationship with them and choice of program areas.*
- 6) What **benchmarks and/or critical factors** can be identified for the success or failure of these projects which may be applicable to other projects?

### 2.3 Audience:

The primary audience of this evaluation is SFCG in the Middle East and SFCG offices elsewhere in the world. The result will be used for organizational learning, improvement of the program, and possibly for fundraising and public information.

### 2.4 Evaluation Methodology:

The SFCG approach to evaluation is grounded in the guiding principles of our work: participatory; culturally sensitive; committed to building capacity; affirming and positive while honest and productively critical and valuing knowledge and approaches from within the context. In addition the standards of utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy developed by the American Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluation will be adhered to.

SFCG suggests that the following methodologies and tools be used in evaluating project activities.

- Interviews with key informants: representatives of partner organizations, particularly those that have received more than one grant, (requires travel to Gaza) and of the donor organization, USAID WB/Gaza, based in Tel Aviv;
- Focus group discussions with target audiences (including training recipients, project participants, and media consumers) and use of media outputs;
- Review of partner internal processes and procedures.

## SCOPE OF WORK

### 3.1 Location:

This evaluation will take place in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Tel Aviv, Gaza, and possibly

elsewhere in the West Bank.

### 3.2 Deliverables:

*In accordance with the attached evaluation expectations, the deliverables must coherently outline the evidence for conclusions and recommendations.*

#### 1. Approach and Methodology paper

- This paper should be no more than 10 pages and should provide SFCG with a detailed description of the proposed methodology, and demonstrate understanding of the projects and program from documentation (to be supplied to evaluator following selection). An Evaluation Framework (see the attached Guidelines for Evaluation) must be included in this proposal. It should detail the information/sources/stakeholders, methodologies (type and quantity), timing and roles and responsibilities against each evaluation question. Should the evaluator have comments on the TOR, these must be supplied in the paper; following discussion of any comments the TOR will be finalised.

**2. Draft Final Report:** The report should be 20-25 pages (excluding executive summary and appendices), consisting of:

**Executive summary:** of key findings, recommendations and lessons learned – no more than 2 pages in English and Arabic

**Report:**

- Table of contents
- Research finding: evidence collected, analysis and associated data presented. This section should include some contextual background, but no more than 2 pages and a history of the program/context is not required
- Conclusions including analysis of benchmarks and/or critical factors
- Recommendations or implications for future action

**Appendices:** which include collected data, detailed description of the methodology with research instruments, list of interviewees, bibliography, and evaluator(s) brief biography.

**3. Final Report:** As above but satisfactorily addressing any SFCG comments on the Draft Final Report In addition **13 bound hard copies** are to be provided to SFCG and one available in electronic form. **Report language** is English with executive summary in Arabic as well as Arabic where necessary in the appendices

SFCG will exercise no editorial control over the final evaluation report. Both the final and the summary report will be credited to the consultancy team and potentially placed in the public domain at the decision of SFCG.

### 3.3 Evaluation Milestones

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Date*</i>
<b>1. Deadline for applications</b>	23 September 2005
2. Evaluator recruitment deadline	1 October 2005
3. 3 days preparatory work	28 October 2005
<b>4. Deliverable 1: Approach and methodological paper</b>	<b>1 November 2005</b>
5. Fieldwork – arrival in country	7 November 2005 Note: <u>The dates 7-15 November are an essential window for this evaluation.</u>
6. Initial meeting with SFCG Middle East Program Office	7 November 2005
7. Briefing to SFCG Middle East Program Office	19 November 2005
<b>8. Deliverable 2: Draft Final Report</b>	<b>9 December 2005</b>
9. SFCG comments/feedback provided to consultants	9 January 2005
<b>10. Deliverable 3: Final Report</b>	<b>23 January 2006</b>

*\* these dates are to be considered the final submission dates – deliverables will however be accepted before these dates.*

### 3.3 Payment Schedule

- If requested and agreed with SFCG 30% of the total budget will be supplied in advance
- All final payments will be made by 30 January 2006

### 3.4 Logistical Support

SFCG will provide preparatory and logistical assistance to the evaluator(s), which include:

- Background materials (monthly reports, proposals, existing evaluations, etc.)
- Preparation meeting with Chief of Party and Program Associate
- Identify some interviewees and set up interviews
- Arrange transportation, lodging, etc.

### 3.5 SFCG Program Team

This evaluation will be managed by the Institutional Learning and Research division of SFCG, represented by Alice Rowley, DME Specialist. The process of review, discussion and implementation of the evaluation will be under the guidance of both ILR and the SFCG staff of the Middle East Program, in particular Gayle Meyers (DME Coordinator) and John Bell (Program Director).

## THE EVALUATION TEAM

### 4.1 Evaluator's Role

The evaluation will be conducted by one or two people. The evaluators will be expected to travel to the various locations cited above to conduct this work. The final writing of the deliverables can be conducted externally to the area.

The team is expected to be responsible for the following, in close consultation with SFCG:

Gain **working** knowledge of project goals and objectives and familiarity with background materials

1. Identify and define evaluation priority areas, methodology and indicators. Provide any comments on the TOR.
2. Design and implement data collection tools
3. Engage stakeholders in the assessment process
4. Analyze data and draft report for SFCG review
5. Write and submit a final report addressing any SFCG comments

### 4.2 Qualifications for the position include:

Required:

- English fluency at FSI 4/4 level and Arabic fluency
- Familiarity with the Middle East and work experience in West Bank/Gaza
- Qualifications/experience as an evaluator, particularly in the use of focus groups (see suggested techniques above)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills

Desired:

- Knowledge of media and conflict resolution.
- Commitment to the improvement of conflict resolution/peacebuilding programming

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Applications should include:

1. Proposal (outlining the methodology and approach, reporting style etc.) – no more than **4 pages**;
2. Proposed budget;
3. CVs of consultant/s;
4. Cover letter with qualifications statement (addressing the required and desired qualifications outlined above);
5. Availability statement (covering the period in the Middle East, commencing on 7<sup>th</sup> November and the whole evaluative period);

6. References (names and contact details);
7. Writing sample (preferably an evaluation report).

### **BUDGET GUIDELINES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Applicants should include their proposed budget, the total of which should **not exceed \$30,000**. The following budget lines are predetermined and are to be detailed and included in the proposed budget:

Round trip air fare US/ Tel Aviv (American carrier or code share)

1 or 2 @ \$1,500, inc. airport transport

Accommodation Jerusalem/Gaza

1 or 2 @ \$100 for 14 nights

Meals and incidentals

1 or 2 @ \$56 14 days

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

**Complete applications containing the above documents should be submitted by 23 September 2005 by mail or electronically to [arowley@sfcg.org](mailto:arowley@sfcg.org)**

**Postal address:** (signed/recorded delivery only)

Alice Rowley

DME Specialist

Institutional Learning and Research (ILR)

Search for Common Ground

18 rue de Panama

Paris. 75018



## ANNEX 2: INSTITUTIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

NAME	TITLE/INSTITUTION
John Bell	Director, Middle East, SFCG Jerusalem Office
Gayle Meyers	Director, Regional Security Projects, SFCG Middle East
Mona Duzdar	Middle East Program Coordinator
Rami	Financial Administrative Manager, AED
Alyssa Teach	Program Associate, SFCG Middle East
Talal Ja`bari	Ex media consultant
Geoffrey Wickselbaum	Ex Media Director (now long-term observer at the Carter Center)

### **Maan**

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Ra`ed Othman	Director of Maan
Linda Banoura	Project Coordinator, Maan network of local TV-stations
Raeda Ghazaleh	Director of drama “seriously joking”
Rifaat Adi	Assistant Producer, Seriously Joking

### **Maan network members - actors, viewers, parents**

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Moataz Kurdi	Director of Al-Amal TV in Hebron (member of Maan network)
Salim Sweidan	Director of Nablus TV (Member of Maan network)
Ibrahim Milham	Independent media consultant
Omar Ja`afary	Member of Advisory Board for Drama series
Muhammad Fauwzi	Photographer, TV-set
Issam Rishmawi	Sound technician
Nida` Farraj	Actress (Selma)
Hind Nasser	Actress (Carol)
Muhammad Al-Qaisy	Actor (Sami)
Nicola Zrieneh	Actor
Muhammed Ea`weiwi	Staff member of Al- Amal TV station/ Hebron
Akram Atallah	Viewer and father of one of amateur actors
Mazen Farraj	Viewer

### **Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution**

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Sa`id Maqadmeh	Director
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Samira Abu Aisha	Project Coordinator
Eyad Abu Hajjar	Director of Human Rights Program
Dr Nafiz al-Madhoun	President, Board of Directors and Legal Reform Specialist at ARKAN
Samer Jibril	Project Coordinator, Nablus
Mona Ghannem	Financial Officer/Accountant
Rania al-Qesawi	Project coordinator
Ahmed Abu Ayesh	Director of PCDRC / Nablus branch
Abdallah Muhammed	Project coordinator /PCDRC Nablus office

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#### **Decision-makers who met with Student Governments**

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Musa al-Za`bout	PLC member Gaza, Head of Educational Committee (PLC)
Muhammed Mikbel	Director of UNRWA extra curricular activities
Amal Hmad	General Manager of Woman and Child Unit, Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), Gaza
Basima al-Qidwe	Director of Non-Curriculum Activities, Ministry of Education, Gaza
Abdel-Jawad Salawde	Lieutenant Colonel, Head of Public Relations, Palestinian Police Dept, Nablus
Musbah Al- Zuhri	Director of the sport activities at the MOE, Gaza

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#### **Supervising Committees, Teachers, parents, student beneficiaries**

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Waleed Abass	Director of Counseling and direction at UNRWA, Gaza
Mr. Sabah Zo`rob	Director of Sports Activities, UNRWA Gaza
Abdel-Salame Ahmeid	Counselor & director at UNRWA, Gaza
Mrs. Muzyan Muhammad Shaker	Head mistress, member of Supervising Committee, Nusseirat Girls School (UNRWA), Gaza
Mirwat al-Najjar	Counselor, member of Supervising Committee, Nusseirat Girls School (UNRWA), Gaza
Naja Abu Rady	Student, elected president of Student Government, Nusseirat Girls School (UNRWA), Gaza
Hala Alaa	Student, prime minister of Student government, Nusseirat Girls School (UNRWA), Gaza
Mr. Muhammad Ihseyn	Principal of al-Zayton Preparatory School, member of Supervising

	Committee, Rimal, Gaza
Abdel-Rahim Radi	Deputy principal of al-Zayton Preparatory School, member of Supervising Committee, Rimal, Gaza
Said Massaid	Counselor, al-Zayton Preparatory School, member of Supervising Committee, Rimal, Gaza
Emad Sheblak	Father of girl participating in Student Government, Gaza
Hanna El-Sinwar	Mother of girl participating in Student Government, Gaza
Musleh al-Dada`	Father of boy participating in Student Government
Ms Awatif Masri	Principal of Zafer al-Masri School, member of Supervising Committee, Nablus
Ms Samira Abu Dayya	Mother of student who withdrew from SG
Ms Suha Barkawi	Counselor and member of Supervising Committee, Zafer al-Masri School, Nablus
Ms Suha Amasha	Teacher & supervision committee member at Zafar Al- Masri school/ Nablus
Fatima Al- Masri	Mother of student , member of the school government/ Nablus

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#### **External sources on media, democracy, youth etc**

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Dr Khalil Shikaki	Palestinian Center for Public Opinion and Survey
Arif Hijawi	Acting Director of Media Institute at Bir Zeit University and editor of the newsletter Al-Hal
Muammar Orabi	General Director, al-Wattan TV (ex-board member of Maan TV-network)
Majeda Zaqqa	Culture and Free Thought Association, Khan Younis
Anne	Child Protection Officer, UNICEF, Jerusalem
Dr Fadl Abu-Hein	Psychologist and director of Community Training Centre and Crisis Management, Gaza
Yasen el-`Amawi	Tamkeen (USAID-funded program), Gaza
Nadim Sami Makhalfa	General Union of Palestinian Teachers, Ramallah
Khadr Khadr	News Media Specialist, JMCC, Jerusalem

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## **ANNEX 3: VIEWERS SURVEY**

### **Viewers View Survey results of Drama Series (Seriously Joking)**

#### **The sample background;**

The survey included a random sample of 114 persons from three main regions in West Bank;

- Tulkarem:55
- Ramallah: 44
- Hebron.15

**Sex of the sample;** Out of the 114 surveyed person, 66 female and 44 male were interviewed

**Age groups** ranging 18- 65 years old.

**Educational background:** The education background of the interviewed sample ranged between illiterate and university education;

- Illiterate 2%
- Basic education 20%,
- Secondary education 33%
- College 25% and
- University education 20%

#### **Methodology;**

Due to limits of timing and resources, this survey was implemented to give idea about viewers' opinion of the series, and not to measure the percentage of viewers' ideas or measure the change of their attitudes

#### **The survey was done using the following ways**

- 1- Direct random interviews in the market and public places.
- 2- Random Telephone call during day time

#### **Questionnaire**

1) Person

- a) Location: where are you from? (village, town, camp)
- b) Age: \_\_\_\_\_

- c) Sex (male /female)
- 2) Do you watch local TV-stations?  
 If yes; which ones \_\_\_\_\_  
 If no, stop
- 3) Have you seen the TV-drama "Seriously Joking?" Yes No  
 If no, have you *heard* about it?  
 If yes, how many episodes have you seen? \_\_\_\_\_  
 A) Did you follow the series?  
 B) What do you think of it? Bad, Good, Very good
- a) How was the quality of production (actors, technical level) Bad, Good, Very good
- b) What were the messages conveyed in the drama?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 If no answer:  
 ○ Did you recognize any of these messages:  
     ○ non-violence,  
     ○ early marriage,  
     ○ *wasta* (corruption),  
     ○ privacy,  
     ○ relationship between the generations (father-son),
- c) Did you see any of the TV-drama characters as role models?  
 If yes, who? and why?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 If no, why not?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Results of the survey

- Out of the 114 person surveyed 52 ( 39 female and 13 male) have seen actually seen the series, out of the 52 who have said they have seen the series ,
- Women seem to be the biggest percentage of viewers of the drama series mainly the house wives
- 45 of these responses came from Tulkarem, 3 from Ramallah and one from Hebron. The reason why most responses from Tulkarem is due to the fact the local channel have re-broadcasted the series one more time after Ramadan,

- Comments on the series Those who have watched the series mentioned the following remarks;
  - The broadcasted episodes highlights local issues from our daily life of the Palestinian society
  - One of the best local drama series have ever been watched, the quality of production was the best
  - Some actors in the series were very professional some others were not good enough
  - Weak story not attractive and stimulating enough
  - Not encouraging waiting for the next episode. (one woman said that she have seen few episodes but not interested to finish to the end”.
  - Some technical mistakes were noticed,

Those who **didn't see the** episodes made the following remarks;

- They have satellite channels and prefer in watch the regional channels for recreational programs.
- Some said they didn't know about the series, but if they have known about good quality local series, they have watched it

### **Analysis of the responses;**

Clearly from the above results, the viewers who watch dram series, are those female, mainly house wives.

Worthwhile mentioning that last survey<sup>26</sup> made on population who watch TV, found that 80% of Palestinian population in West Bank have access to satellite connection

- In Ramallah the most watched local channel is Wattan. This channel, which is part of Maan network, wasn't among the local channels who broadcasted the series.
- During Ramadan is a month of extensive recreational programs, especially the dram series,

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<sup>26</sup> Alpha International for research, polling and informatics. Centre 2005

Regional satellite channels usually race among themselves to produce or broadcast good shows and dram series. Local channels capacity to compete stays marginal

- Tulkarem ranked number one in the number of viewer, because the local tv-channel (Shams) **re-broadcasted** the series one more time after Ramadan.

## ANNEX 4: ACTIVITY TABLE OF STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Activity detail	Planned activity	Achieved results	remarks
1. Supervision committee formation & training	1- form 16 committee formed and trained	1. 16 committees were formed with 48 member 2. 48 training hour as conducted	
2. two Manuals preparations	1. Conceptual manual prepared, 1900 copy distributed. 2. practical manual prepared at the end of month ten	Conceptual manual was prepared. 2. 2000 copy were distributed	By the time of the preparing this report , the second manual was not completed
3. Elections of students parliaments	1. 35 student were elected in the 16 school	1120 student from the 16 schools were elected	
4. The judicial system	10 students were selected for the judicial system in 16 schools. - twenty hour training are conducted in each school	- 129 judicial students in the 16 school. - a total 320 training hour were conducted during four days in each school	
5. Student government activities	United government will held several activities during the summer holidays	- 128 awareness session were conducted in 16 schools - 32 voluntary actions campaigns -16 initiatives for the students, - 64 visit to official bodies and organizations, - 80 meetings with decision makers, Publishing 48 bulletins	
6. United government formation	Two united government, one in Nablus another in Gaza will be formed and trained	- Two united government were formed with 40 students in Gaza and 30 students in Nablus. - 60 training hours were conducted.	
7. United government activities		- 12 awareness sessions - 3 open meetings	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 5 meetings with decision makers</li><li>- 4 visits for official for organizations</li><li>- 5 radio serials</li><li>- I voluntary campaign</li><li>- two news letter were produced ,10000 copy were distributed</li></ul>	
8. The final conference	Two conference will be held by the end of the project activities	The two conferences were held in both Nablus and Gaza at the end of the project	

## **ANNEX 5: PALESTINIAN CURRICULUM FLOWCHART QUESTIONS**

### **QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED:**

1. How can Palestinians overcome their sense powerless and/or exclusion?
2. How can Palestinians create new choices/options/opportunities?
3. How can Palestinians learn to make the right choices?
4. How can Palestinians live with the choices they and others make?
5. How can Palestinians create and follow proper role models?
6. How can Palestinians create a society than recognizes merit rather a defining a person's value by social position, gender, ability to influence (corruption), or other such characteristics?
7. How can Palestinians create a sense of hope for themselves?
8. How can Palestinians define relationships between individual and group that recognize privacy, individuality, dignity, and other attributes of the person rather than of the group?
9. How can Palestinians contribute to their own sense of security?
10. How can Palestinians optimally respond to change (social, political, economic, and technological)?

(from Eran Frankel, Palestinian Curriculum Flowchart, March 2005)

## ANNEX 6: LITERATURE REVIEWED

### *Documents from Search for Common Ground*

- “Transforming Conflict”, Pamphlet about Search for Common Ground, undated.
- Frankel, Eran “Palestinian Curriculum Flowchart”, March 2005

### *PCDCR Project documents*

- Student Teacher Democracy and Governance Manual
- Students Government Newsletters (*Al-Hokoma Al-madrasiyya*)
- NVCR Program Document
- Agreement between AED and PCDCR
- Milestones reports and attachments from 1-10
- Mid Term Evaluation for the Student Government project, conducted in June 2005,
- Practical annual outline
- Student government project document
- Student government achievements document
- Reports and minutes from student government activities (meeting with decision-makers, visits and field trips etc)

### *Maan network*

- Survey of local TV stations Conducted by Birzeit Development Studies,
- Agreement between Bethlehem Television and AED
- Milestones reports and attachments
- Maan Network brochure “Maan – Past, Present and Future Activities” July 2005
- Press releases
- Newspaper articles:
  - “Palestinians soak up soap operas”, USA Today, 3 November 2005
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1. Evaluation of conflict resolution intervention

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(University of Ulster & The United Nations University)

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Bush, Kenneth, *A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) of Development Projects in Conflict Zone*, The Peacebuilding and Program Initiative, IDRC. Canada Ottawa

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## **ANNEX 7: BIOGRAPHIES OF EVALUATORS**

### **TEAM LEADER – NORA INGDAL, NORWAY**

Nora Ingdal holds a Master's degree (MA) in comparative politics of the Middle East with Islamic studies and Arabic language as minors. She has nine years of working experience in planning, appraisal, monitoring, and evaluation of aid policy, programs and projects in mainly the Palestinian areas. She was based four years in Gaza as Resident Representative for Norwegian People's Aid gaining valuable practical experience in administrating long-term development aid and relief work during high level of conflict.

During the last year she has been a team leader and member of four reviews, appraisals and evaluations in the Palestinian areas contracted by among others governments of Norway, Denmark, Germany and several Norwegian NGO's as well as Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) in fields of good governance, education, culture/theatre, youth and children. She has worked mainly in the Middle East, but also has some research/ academic experience from working with post-conflict issues like demobilised soldiers in several African countries. She has good communication skills with background from journalism, editing and author.

### **TEAM MEMBER – HANAN BOUDART, WEST BANK**

Hanan Boudart, a Palestinian and French national, is completing her M.Sc. in public policy and management from University of London. She has extensive experience in project design, planning, monitoring, and evaluation and in participatory processes. She has five years of experience is working as Monitoring and Evaluation officer in the Local rural development program at UNDP. She has ten years of experience working with dialogue activities and joint project implementation, training courses in human rights, democracy training techniques as well as courses in conflict resolution and diplomacy. She has worked in several Palestinian NGOs and has in-depth knowledge and experience of both working with the grassroots and with civil society, as well as managing both European Commission and USAID-funded projects.

Finally, she has a strong commitment to non-violent strategies and has been active for the last ten years in forging links and contacts between Palestinian and Israeli women. She is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the JERUSALEM CENTER FOR WOMEN [[www.j-c-w.org](http://www.j-c-w.org)].